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Official quits, accuses Netanyahu of neglecting Russian Jews

TEL AVIV (AP) - The top Israeli liaison with Jews from the former Soviet Union quit Sunday, accusing Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu of "abandonment" of his constituency. Yaacov Kedmi's resignation letter was written five months ago, but published Sunday — the day Netanyahu formally accepted the popular activist's resignation after the letter was leaked over the weekend. Kedmi accused the prime minister of "abandoning the Jews of the former Soviet Union, avoiding the responsibility of the state of Israel and deceiving the public with empty, meaningless verbiage." Kedmi is the latest in a long line of senior officials who have expressed disappointment with Netanyahu.

Number 7128



AMMAN MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1999, MUHARRAM 10, 1420

Palestinians split over statehood declaration — poll

NABLUS (AFP) - Palestinians remain evenly divided over whether Yasser Arafat should give in to international pressure to postpone the declaration of an independent state, an opinion poll suggested Sunday. Forty-eight per cent of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip want Arafat to delay a declaration until he has reached agreement with Israel, the poll published by the Nablus-based Centre for Palestine Research Studies suggested. Forty-three per cent want him to press ahead with his threat to declare a state unilaterally when the interim five-year period of self-rule agreed in Washington in 1994 expires on May 4, the poll found. And a further nine per cent remain undecided, according to the poll, which gave a margin of error of three per cent.

Price: Jordan 200 Fils

King receives Israeli centrist party candidate Mordechai

By Arny Henderson with Agencies

Volume 24

AMMAN — His Majesty King Abdullah on Sunday received the leader of Israel's newly-formed centrist party, a gesture which political pundits in Jordan and Israel have interpreted as Jordan's encouragement of a more moderate leads. ership in Israel ahead of the Jewish state's May 17 elections.

Officials have kept the nature of discussions between King Abdullah and former Likud Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai more or less under wraps, insisting that the visit was private, but foreign agencies reported that the two met for a working lunch and discussed issues related to the peace process.

Jordanian officials have insisted that the Kingdom will stay out of the Israeli elections fray, but off the record, some have suggested that, for practical reasons, their fingers are crossed for an Israeli governbetween Labour and Likud ide-

ologies.
The most practical thing, if we look at the issues before us, is some kind of national unity government," one senior official told the Jordan Times recently, referring to impending final status talks between Israel and the Palestinians. "When it comes to land, [Israelis] are talking about... a Jewish issue. [Israelis] are arguing about 'Jewish land,' as far as they are concerned, which means that a national consensus [in Israel] is a must before the peace process can move forward. It's not a question of names any more. For the Arabs, it's a matter of who can deliver."

Jordan has made no secret of its frustration with Israeli Prime Benyamin Netanyahu's Likud government for failing to move the peace process forward, both through its refusal to implement the Wye River agreement, brokered by the late King Hussein,

Jordanian trade with the West

King Abdullah has indicated that Amman's priorities have been refocused on inter-Arab ties, rather than on mollycoddling an intransigent western neighbour. However, he maintains that the historic 1994 treaty with the Jewish state, signed by his father, is secure.

Netanyahu made a muchpublicised visit to Jordan in March in his capacity as prime minister, but until now, no other candidate, except Mordechai, who left the Likud earlier this year to join Israel's new centrist party, has visited the Kingdom ahead of the elections.

Agencies quoted Jordanian officials as saying that the invitation does not signal a show of support for or against any candidate in Israel's elections.

But to many, the visit is reminiscent of 1996, when His Royal Highness Prince Hassan, then crown prince, received Netanyahu, then a contender

NEW DELHI (AFP)

India on Sunday stood on the

verge of its third general

elections in three years when

opposition leader Sonia

Gandhi threw in the towel on

her bid to form a new gov-

After meeting Gandhi, President K.R. Narayanan

called in outgoing Prime

Minister Atal Behari Vajpay-

ee, who later told reporters

he would convene a meeting

The situation would appear

to leave Narayanan with lit-

tle choice but to call an elec-

tion, especially as Gandhi

stressed that Congress would

not support a coalition of

The United News of India

reported that Election Com-

missioner M.S. Gill, current-

ly on a visit to the United

States, had been summoned

Asked if the president had

other opposition parties.

back to New Delhi.

of his cabinet on Monday.

won by a narrow margin over Shimon Peres, and Labour Party leaders were later to claim that the meeting influenced the

Israeli vote. On Saturday, Reuters quoted Netanyahu's advisor David Bar-Ilan as saying that he could not comment on the visit, which, he said, "had implications on the elections."

Agence France Presse also quoted other Israeli Likud officials criticising the visit.

"The timing of the visit seems strange to me," said Moshe Katzav, Israeli tourism minister and Likud campaign official. "It seems that Arab officials want to interfere in Israel's elec-

An Israeli official, who requested anonymity, told the Jordan Times that the visit of Mordechai, along with another visit planned by Labour leader Ehud Barak, is likely to be interpreted by Israeli voters as date except Netanyahu.

India near elections

to form government

one week ago.

the lower house.

held their backing.

It was just six more than

the figure she gave to the

president on Friday, and still

well-short of the 272 neces-

sary for a simple majority in

"I tried my best to con-

vince my colleagues and friends in secular parties but

I have not been able to con-

vince them," Gandhi said,

hitting out at allies who with-

their personal interests

before the interests of the

nation," she said. "You know

who they are better than I

Asked whether fresh elec-

tions were now inevitable.

the Italian-born Congress

president said the decision

decides, we will abide by,"

she said. "We have been

working all along as a

motion of confidence by a

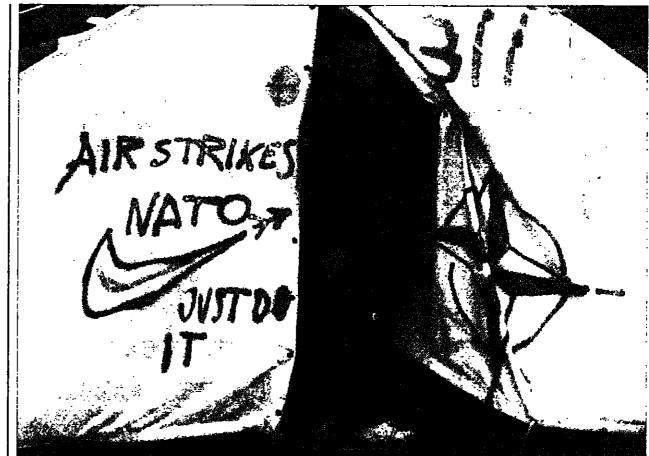
single vote.

"Whatever the president

lay with Narayanan.

"Some parties have put

as Congress fails



Ethnic Albanian refugee Astrit Selmani, 17, on Sunday emerges from his tent displaying spray painted slogans in support of NATO bombing of Yugoslavia inside the Stenkovec refugee camp near Skopje, Macedonia (AP photo)

Yugoslavia issues appeal to U.N. over NATO 'aggression'

Yeltsin, Clinton discuss crisis; Russia warns against ground war

Agencies

NATO UNLEASHED missiles and bombs across Yugoslavia on Sunday as Belgrade chastised the United Nations for failing to condemn the attacks and urged the world body to halt the "aggression."

U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, attending NATO's 50th anniversary summit in Washington, insisted there was no target date for deploying ground troops in

Kosovo. "What I think has really come out of this session here at the summit... is a really genuine support for an intensified

air campaign." Albright said. "Nobody has a date in the calendar and we are not operating to a date in the calendar," Cook said. "But we've always recognised that at some stage ground forces are going to be necessary to secure the territory of Kosovo."

NATO's leaders assured their counterparts from countries bordering Yugoslavia that the alliance would retaliate if Serbs threatened them for their support of NATO's air war (see separate story).

Risking a possible confrontation with Russia — Serbia's major oil supplier before air strikes began on March 24 - NATO also said it planned to "visit and search" ships bound for Yugoslavia.

Stopping Russian tankers from delivering oil could antagonise Moscow at a time when NATO leaders want Russia to help mediate a settlement with Belgrade and contribute to a force to protect ethnic Albanians if and when they neturn home.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. President Bill Clinton held a "lengthy" discussion Sunday on the Kosovo crisis, a top U.S. official said. "I believe President Yeltsin

and the Russians are very serious about trying to find a peaceful solution," national security adviser Sandy Berger said on CNN's "Late Edition."

Clinton encouraged Yeltsin to continue the Russian search for peace, Berger said. "I believe there will be continued contact over the days ahead," he added.

In Moscow, Interfax news agency reported earlier Sunday that Yeltsin initiated a 90minute phone call to Clinton after conferring with Russian peace envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin.

It was the third exchange between the leaders on Kosovo since NATO began its air offensive on Yugoslavia on March 24.

Yugoslavia. "I think we should revise several aspects of our relations with NATO, and, on the economic front, we may need to bring certain adjustments to our spending," Primakov said on Russian TV6.

Belgrade Thursday for talks

with Milosevic that the envoy

said yielded an accord on the

deployment of a military force

Yugoslav authorities, how-

ever, denied that they had

agreed to such an intervention.

stating that only an observer

Meanwhile, Prime Minister

Yevgeny Primakov warned

during an interview televised

in Russia on Sunday that Rus-

sia may reconsider its relations

with NATO if the alliance

launches a ground offensive in

force would be allowed.

to Kosovo.

When the interviewer asked whether those "adjustments" meant an increase in defence spending. Primakov said: "At any rate, more attention Ishould be focused] on defence, but not necessarily in spending."

Asked about his relations with Albright, Primakov denied feeling "wronged," despite strained relations between the two countries, who disagree vehemently on the air strikes against Serbia. "We can agree or not agree,"

clouds, NATO planes hit a chemical plant in central Serbia as well as barracks and industries in the southern city

In a relatively quiet 32nd

night of raids, hampered by

Serbian state television resumed broadcasting on Sunday afternoon after being knocked off the air for the second time in three days by NATO air strikes.

The Yugoslav state news agency Tanjug also reported that a six-year-old girl had been killed by a NATO missile in the Kosovo village of Velika Dobranja, south of the

provincial capital Pristina. The child, Arta Lugic, was playing in the backyard of her family home when she was

killed Tanjug said. NATO had bombed the main Serbian television building in central Belgrade on Friday in an attack widely criticised in the West and which Tanjug said killed at least 10

people. Meanwhile, Yugoslav Foreign Minister Zivadin Jovanovic wrote a letter to the chairman of the U.N. Security Council, describing the NATO air war as the most flagrant violation of the U.N. Charter since the international body was founded.

(Continued on page 2)

Israel steps up action against Palestinian offices in Jerusalem

An Israeli police officer attaches a closure notice to the

door of the Arab east Jerusalem Palestinian-run pris-

Agencies

oners' club on Sunday (AP photo)

IN A new Israeli crackdown on Palestinian institutions in Arab east Jerusalem, police on Sunday closed the Palestinian prisoners club for alleged links with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

"The Palestinians opened the club in contradiction of an agreement reached two weeks ago." Israeli police spokeswoman Linda Menuchin told

In a court hearing two weeks ago, Israel agreed not to close the club if the Palestinians refrain from carrying out activities on its premises.

The club works mainly for the welfare of the families of Palestinians detained by Israel. When activity in the prisoner's club resumed on Sunday. Internal Security Minister

premises closed, Menuchin Policemen drilled bolts into

Avigdor Kahalani ordered the

the main entrance to the club and changed the locks.

Israel charges that the prisoners' club is an official institution of the PNA and operates in Arab east Jerusalem in violation of Israeli-Palestinian peace agreements.

The Palestinians working in the prisoners' club say they have no official links with the

At the end of March, Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu ordered the closure of the prisoners' club and two other offices allegedly linked to the PNA.

On Thursday, Netanyahu also ordered the closure of unspecified offices within Orient House, the unofficial headquarters of the PLO in east Jerusalem, charging that they are operated by the PNA. The prime minister instructed Kahalani to put together a plan for the closure.

(Continued on page 2)

ordered the preparation of a responsible opposition and resolution to dissolve parliawe will continue to do this." The current political crisis ment, Vajpayee said: "I cannot say anything today." was triggered by the collapse on April 17 of Vajpayee's 13month-old coalition, after losing a parliamentary

Gandhi showed the president a list of 239 MPs willing to support a minority Congress administration to replace the Hindu nationalist-led coalition, which was voted out of office more than

Chemomyrdin travelled to (Continued on page 2) NATO vows to protect frontline states in Kosovo conflict

WASHINGTON (R) — NATO leaders pledged on Sunday to protect the seven nations bordering Yugoslavia should Serb forces attack them for their support of the allied air war over

The vow of solidarity was given in a meeting between NATO leaders and leaders of Yugoslavia border states to map a strategy for the political and economic reconstruction of the Balkans once the Kosovo war is over.

It came on the third and final day of a 50th anniversary NATO summit overshadowed by the war in Yugoslavia, where NATO again bombed targets across that country. halting television broadcasts and hitting a barracks and chemical plant.

"The nations of the region have risked and even faced armed confrontation with Serbia by facilitating and supporting our campaign to end the bloodshed in Kosovo," U.S. President Bill Clinton told the gathering in the omate, flag-draped Mellon Auditorium, where the treaty establishing NATO was signed in 1949.

He said NATO had made its posi-

tion clear: "If Belgrade challenges its neighbours as a result of the presence of NATO, we will respond."

In the meeting, each leader of the non-NATO border states - Albania. Macedonia, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Slovenia — spoke in favour of a NATO victory over Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic's Serb forces in Kosovo.

"We heard seven speeches today but only one message: they share our determination to prevail and to see this through, and they are willing to put up with the short-term inconveniences resulting from the Kosovo crisis," said NATO spokesman Jamie

Each border state has been drawn into the crisis in one way or another. Albania and Macedonia are bearing the brunt of the massive refugee crisis

triggered by Serbia's bloody crackdown on ethnic Albanians. Thousands of NATO troops are deployed in Albania and Macedonia and Bosnia, and Shea said Macedonia had agreed to permit the alliance to

station additional British and German

In addition, Romania and Slovenia

have granted NATO the use of air space for alliance military operations against Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria is expected to soon vote to give similar permission. Shea told reporters. Hungary, the only NATO country bordering Yugoslavia, is letting

NATO planes use its three military airfields. Croana and Bulgaria have imposed sanctions on Yugoslavia. "Milosevic is all alone," said Shea. "He is a pariah in his own backyard.

His neighbours are moving away from him. They want to turn their backs on the past and look to the British Prime Minister Tony Blair

came close to calling Milosevic a war criminal, telling NBC's "Meet the Press" that, "I can't really believe that he is ignorant of what people are doing under his control."

Reconstruction has become urgent for Yugoslavia's neighbours, who, sometimes reluctantly, have backed NATO during its month-long air war or absorbed potentially destabilising refugee flows from Kosovo.

"We meet at a time of crisis in Kosovo, and no one knows better the full impact of the crisis than those who live in the immediate neighbourhood," said NATO Secretary General Javier Solana.

Clinton said NATO allies were committed to working with the countries and with multilateral financial institutions to ease emergency needs and help with debts.

U.S. officials said no detailed plan for aid is likely to emerge from the meeting.

Alliance military officials also were trying to hammer out a plan for intercepting oil bound for Yugoslavia at the risk of angering Belgrade's top oil supplier, Russia. It was unclear if they would complete it by the time the summit ended.

France has expressed reservations about the legality of using force to stop a ship on the high seas, but a U.S. official said he believed that after consultations France was now supportive of the so-called "visit and search"

In response to Russian protests of the plan, Shea said: "We expect Russia to exercise the restraint it has exercised so far."

NATO members have made clear they intend to undertake a rebuilding programme for Kosovo, which has been devastated by allied bombs and pillaging by Serb troops. Macedonia and Albania would also be likely ben-Germany has called for a project on

the scale of the Marshall Plan that helped rebuild Europe after World War II and suggested European Union membership should eventually be offered to Balkan countries. Some European countries also have called for debt relief for the region.

The cost of rebuilding the region is certain to run into billions of dollars. NATO leaders also met some 23 leaders of former Soviet bloc countries and neutral European countries under the alliance's Partnership for

Peace programme. Russia, which opposes the NATO air war, was conspicuous by its absence, as was hardline Belarus.

Court upholds sentence for friend of Rabin's killer

TEL AVIV (AFP) - An that she did not take cov Wienret said. She inform his superiors Israeli court upheld on seriously Amir's words remains free pending about Amir's plans. Sunday a nine-month jail sentence against a student friend of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's murderer for failing to prevent the

1995 assassination. A three-judge panel at Tel Aviv district court the life of the prime rejected an appeal by Margalit Har-Shefi, 23, against her conviction in September for knowing about the planned mur-

Two judges concurred with the lower court verdict while the third believed she should be acquitted because of a lack of evidence.

After the hearing, Har-Shefi, who comes from the West Bank settlement of Beit Al, said about planning to kill Rabin.

intention and meaning to his words, I would have done everything within my power to save minister. That is the truth," Har-Shefi told Israeli Radio.

"I am disappointed that I did not manage to der by right-wing prove my innocence. I extremist Yigal Amir am comforting myself am comforting myself and failing to prevent it. with the fact that there is an 80-page minority opinion in my favour, she added, reading from a prepared statement.

> Har-Shefi, who was a law student with Amir at Tel Aviv's Bar-Illan university, plans to appeal again to the supreme court, her lawyer Yaa-

France had raised legal reserva-

tions because stopping a ship

on the high seas would be an

Italian Foreign Minister

Lamberto Dini said "a block-

ade is preferable to destruc-

tion... of terminals in the port of

Bar" or of bridges and other

facilities in Montenegro, Ser-

In a sign of rising tension in

Montenegro, formally a partner

with Serbia in the Yugoslav

federation, the country's most

prominent media figure said he

was going into hiding to escape

capture and possible torture at

the hands of the Yugoslav army.

an arrest warrant for Miodrag

Perovic, founder of Montene-

ing the weekly mag

gro's Antenna M radio station

itor in a sharp intensification of

the military's battle against

The army, which takes its

orders from Belgrade, has also

issued a summons for Nebojsa

Redzic, editor-in-chief of

another independent local radio

station, Radio Free Montene-

In Tirana, witnesses reported

local news organisations.

On Friday, the army issued

bia's outlet to the sea.

act of war.

the appeal.

Prosecutors had called "Had I thought that for Har-Shefi to serve this man attributed an the maximum two-year sentence for failing to prevent a crime and many left-wing activists criticised the ninemonth term as too lenient.

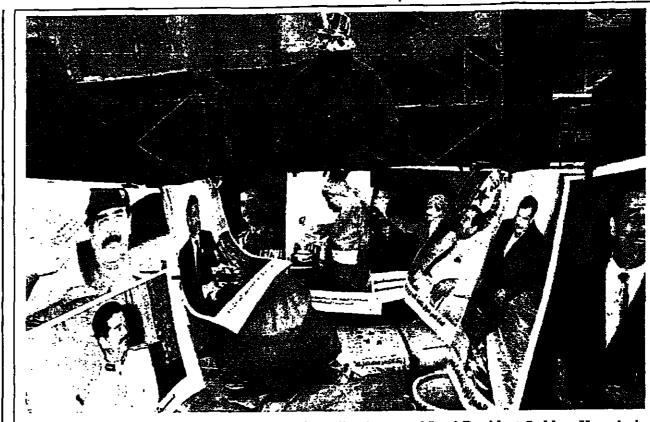
> Amir shot Rabin three times in Tel Aviv on November 4, 1995 in a bid to halt the Israeli government's policy of transferring West Bank land to the Palestinians. He was jailed for life in

In another development on Sunday, a former Israeli secret service informer and rightwas charged with the Shefi for failing to charges.

Avishai Raviv, codenamed "Champagne," was secretly paid by the internal security Shin Beth, Israel's internal security service, to inform on his militant associates.

According indictment presented to Jerusalem district court. Raviv was told by Amir of an earlier plan to kill Rabin in 1995. However, he is not suspected of involvement in the murder itself.

Raviv, who is also accused of belonging to "terrorist organisation" over his creation wing Jewish extremist of an extreme rightwing group known as same offence as Har- Eyal, has rejected the



SADDAM'S BIRTHDAY: An Iraqi street vendor sells pictures of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in Baghdad on Sunday. Iraq is gearing up for celebrations to mark their president's 62nd birthday on Wednesday (AFP photo)

Israel's Peace Now meets

Yugoslavia issues appeal to U.N. over NATO 'aggression'

(Continued from page 1)

"The Security Council must take concrete measures to end the aggression, as a contribution to creating the conditions for bringing back peace and stability to the region and resolving the problem by political means," Jovanovic wrote.

In his letter, read out on Belgrade-based BK television, Jovanovic accused NATO of choosing mainly civilian targets that had produced a flood of refugees.

Jovanovic rejected any deployment of foreign, armed troops on his territory to enforce any peace settlement and said in an interview with the Washington Post the Vietnam war "would be nothing" compared with the kind of war the United States would risk by

invading Yugoslavia. In Washington, NATO leaders have vowed to step up military and economic pressure on Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, demanding a withdrawal of his forces from Kosovo, the return of 600,000 refugees and deployment of a NATO -led force in the

province to protect them. Clinton said NATO was not drifting into a Vietnam-style conflict but added that it would not end swiftly like the 1991 Gulf War

"I think the important thing for everyone to understand is that in order for this strategy to succeed, we need two things --one: vigorous execution and two: patience," Clinton said.

Splits over the oil blockade emerged in the summit of the 19-nation bloc. French President Jacques Chirac said

'Cairo must expel Sudanese opposition'

KHARTOUM (AFP) -Sudan President Omar Al Bashir accused Egypt of catering to the Sudanese opposition and said they must be expelled from Egyptian soil before relations with Cairo can be normalised.

"Sudan maintains an open-hearted attitude of goodwill towards Egypt, but Egypt has not responded in kind and has not resolved the question of its relations with Sudan." Bashir said on state television on Saturday.

We expelled the Egyptian opposition some time ago and there is no Egyptian opposition in Sudan.

But the Sudanese opposition in Egypt enjoys political and material support and receives full care," he said.

"Egypt's hosting of the Sudanese opposition... will remain an obstacle for normalisation of relations between the two countries,' Bashir said. Sudan and Egypt both claim the Halaib territory

which skirts the Red Sea. Sudanese opposition parties have offices in Egypt. and many leaders have moved permanently to Cairo since the 1989 coup that brought Bashir's Islamist government to

PLO official in Orient House OCCUPIED JERUSALEM Wednesday (AFP) — A delegation from Israel's Peace Now movement met on Satur-

day with top PLO representative for Jerusalem Faisal Husseini in Orient House, the unofficial Palestinian headquarters ordered closed by Israeli Prime Minister

Benyamin Netanyahu. group told reporters after the meeting that the closure order was a "dangerous provocation" intended to boost the embattled premier's re-election hopes. He said a larger Peace Now delegation

would go to Orient House on Monday. Netanyahu ordered the closure after a meeting at

Husseini and Arab diplomats that he claimed violated agreements barring National Palestinian Authority activity in Jerusalem.

"We are not ready to have Orient House, situated in the capital of the state of Israel, serve as the Palestinian foreign A spokesman for the ministry," he said on Thursday.

Following the order, several European diplomats including representatives from Belgium, Britain and the Netherlands, also met Husseini at Orient House. The centre, technically

a private residence, has been used as a base of

the 1993 Oslo peace campaign. accords which created the PNA. It includes offices for

organisations welfare serving Arab east Jerusalem's Palestinian Palestinian residents, advisors for international aid organisations and various research groups.

Israeli security sources have warned that any attempt to close Orient House down completely could spark violence. Netanyahu, who is lag-

ging in opinion polls behind his main rival for the premiership, Labour recognised by Party chief Ehud Barak. has tried to make an alleged Palestinian threat operations for local to Israeli control over the capital of a state of Palestinian leaders in Jerusalem a central their own.

between Jerusalem since before theme of his reelection

Under accords, the PNA is authorised to operate only in agreed parts of the West Bank and Gaza

The political status of Arab east Jerusalem. which Israel occupied in 1967 and later annexed as part of its capital, was to be resolved in future negotiations.

Israel insists that Arab east Jerusalem is part of its undivided eternal capital - a declaration not international community, while the Palestinians hope to make the sector

India near elections as Congress fails to form government

(Continued from page 1)

Vajpayee's Hindu nationalist BJP — still the largest in parliament with 182 seats — had urged Narayanan to consider calling it back to power if the opposition failed to provide an alternative.

the arrival of a second wave of However, Vajpayee gave no U.S. Apache attack helicopters. The Apaches are part of a indication following his meetsquadron of 24 Washington is ing with the president on Sunday that any such invitation sending to Albania. NATO spokesman Jamie had been extended.

Instead he focused on the Shea said on Sunday Macedonia had agreed to allow NATO divisions within the opposition that had blocked their attempts to station more British and German troops on its territory, to form a new government. while Romania and Slovenia

"They had said an alternative government could be formed within five minutes and even one minute. Till today there has been no sign of that," Vajpayee said. "Congress admitted

defeat to the president and so did the Communists." The bid for power by Congress - the second largest party with 140 seats foundered on the refusal of key opposition groups to prop

up a minority Congress govemment from the outside. Instead they proposed a Communist-led "third front" coalition with Congress backing from the outside. But that was rejected on Sunday by India's main left-wing party the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) - and

Congress itself. Following a politburo meeting, CPI-M Secretary General Harkishan Singh Surject said

the only remaining option was a compromise in which Congress would agree to a coalition with other opposition parties. But Gandhi ruled out that possibility after her audience with Narayanan. "We are not ready to bargain. We are not going to support a third or

fourth front," she said. Elections in India, with its 600 million-strong electorate, are a logistical nightmare. Recent experience shows the results are hardly worth the

No single party has won an overall majority since 1984. The last two polls in 1996 and 1998 produced disastrously fragmented parliaments which failed miserably to provide a stable government.

Israel steps up action against Palestinian offices in Jerusalem

(Continued from page 1)

On Sunday, the top Palestinian official in Jerusalem warned of violence if Netanyahu carries out his threat to close parts of Orient House.

"Unrest is likely coming." Husseini told Faisal reporters at Orient House. "The Netanyahu government is making a big mistake by creating such a situation, by raising now such an issue," he said.

"It is only wisdom that can solve this problem. We hope that there will be enough wisdom [on the Israeli side] to find a solution," he said.

Husseini renewed Palescharges tinian Netanyahu was trying to win right-wing support ahead of general elections

on May 17.

Meanwhile, the Arab League on Sunday urged Britain and France to press Israel to reverse a decision to shut Orient House.

"We asked them to intervene urgently to put pressure on Israel to reverse its decision to close the Palestinian National Authority offices in Orient House," league assistant secretary general, Said Kamal, told

reporters. Similar requests will be sent to other European

leaders, Kamal said.

On Friday, described the Israeli measure as "provocative" and a "dangerous" electoral ploy threatening to destabilise

Israel considers Arab east Jerusalem, which it occupied in June 1967, to be an integral part of its territory and tries to prevent any official Palestinian activity

The international community has never recognised Israel's annexation of Arab east Jerusalem which the Palestinians want to make the capital of a future state.

DEPARTURES

Frankfurt, London (RJ)

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel. 4773111-19 PROGRAMME TWO

18:00	Children's Programme -
Lucky	Luke
19:00	Le Journal
19:15	French Programme
	News headlines
19:33	French Programme
	The Internet Cafe
	French Programme
	Encounter
22-30	News in English
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PRAYER TIMES

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CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 5920740 Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785

Anglican Church 4624853/4624811. Church Tel. 4771751.

Tel. 5865897 German-speaking Evangelical

had granted NATO the use of

their air space. Bulgaria was

expected to give similar per-

mission soon.

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	The Evangelical Local Chur
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	Church of Jesus Christ of Lati
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	Salle College Tel. 5661757
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Church Tel. 4775261 St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590

St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox Amman International Church

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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Church of Presentation, Sweifieh Tel. 5920146 The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757 The English-Language Catholic expected today in the following Parish Tel. 4614190

Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679 The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052 The Armenian Catholic Church 4771331 The Armenian Orthodox

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366 Bulletin supplied by the Depart-

WEATHER

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Temperatures are expected to dro
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ate. In Aqaba, winds will b

Min./Max. temp. .14/27 ..17/31

.13/30 Deserts. Jordan Valley... [el. Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 29 Agaba 31 Humidity Palestine Pharmacy....(05)983562 readings: Amman 24 per cent. Aqaba 35 per cent.

Following are the temperatures

Ajloun	13/2
Jerash	16/3
Um Qays	
Madaba	14/2
Petra	15/2
Dead Sea	18/3
HERRI	Т.

TELEPHONE NIGHT DUTY

	AMMAN:	
	Dt. Yousef Naser	4751404
,	Dr. Sa'id Tawfiq	
	Dr. Nidal As'ad	4751672
1	Dr. Issam Asmar	
;	AMMAN:	

Firas Pharmacy5661912 Al Salam Pharmacy ..4636730 Mayadah Pharmacy5537004 Water Authority

Dr. Mahmoud Abul Haija. (02) 245209 RJ Flight Information.......44-53200 Fou'ad Pharmacy(02)275360 Queen Alia Intl. Airport44-53200 ZAROA: Dr. Nabil Saffarini (05)901322

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111	
Civil Defence Department5661111	
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue	
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Civil Defence Emergency199	
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777	1
Fire Brigade4617101	Ì
Blood Bank4775121	,
Highway Police5343402	
Traffic Police4896390	
Public Security Dept4630321	
Hotel Complaints5605800	
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Water & Sewernge Complaints4897467	
Amman Municipality Complaints	
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Telephone Information (directory	
assistance)121	
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Central Amanan Telephone Repairs	
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HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

The Arab Centre for Hea	irt and Spe-
cial Surgery	5921199
The Islamic, Abdli	.5666131/7
Hussein Medical Centre.	5856856
Luzmila	4630195
Khalidi Maternity	4644281/6
Akileh Maternity	4612411/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	4642362
Malhas, J. Amman.	
Palestine, Shmeisani	
Shmeisani Hospital	
Jordan Hospital	
University Hospital	
Al-Muasher Hospital	
Al-Ahli, Abdali	
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Zarqa National Hospital ..(05)900560 07:30 _4774111 Ibn Sina Hospital____(05)986731 08:30 .5680100 Al Hikma Modern Hospital

Sisters Hospital ..(02)7102831, (02)7102011 AQABA:

Al Nafees Hospital

_(02)7101372, (02)7103101

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ARRIVALS

Zarqa Govt. Hospital.......(05)983323 Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

Sanaa (RJ) Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights Damascus (RJ) 05:35 ... Jeddah (RJ) 08:35 09:20Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ) 11:05 Beirut (RJ) 11:20Shannon, Chicago (RJ) 09:25 09:30 New Delhi (RJ) Princess Basma Hospital .(02)275555 _Cairo (RJ) Roman Catholic Hospital (02)272275

16:30 London (RJ) 16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ) .Kuwait (RJ) 16:50 18:40 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ) 23:15Tel Aviv (add) (RJ) Speciality Hospital .. (02)7103100 03:15 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

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HRH Crown Prince Hamzah looks on as Amman Mayor Nidal Hadid explains one of GAM's projects on a to-scale model (Petra photo)

Crown Prince Hamzeh visits GAM

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hamzah on Sunday visited the Greater Amman Municipality and was briefed by Mayor Nidal Hadid and other senior assistants on development projects within the

According to Hadid. major projects the municipality is currently involved in implementing include the Jordan Street being built within the Hashemi Shamali region, the Nashaa tunnel in eastern Amman and a number of public gar-

The Crown Prince listened to a briefing about the municipality's plans to protect the environment, sanitation schemes, the new solid waste site near Amman, the capital's new slaughter house and a plant

for recycling plastics.
Prince Hamzah also inspected the municipality's ongoing work on Al Hussein Cultural Centre and later made a tour of the municipality's various sections and expressed appreciation of the municipal council's efforts to improve services for the capital's residents.

Hadid also briefed the Crown Prince on the municipality's preparations to celebrate the Kingdom's Independence Day on May

Hadid said that the Amman Municipality was ready to offer assistance to other municipalities for their own celebration preparations, which will include firework displays and decorations.

Hadid spoke before Minister of Interior Nayef Al Qadi and representatives of the ministries of education and youth as well as the Jordan Armed Forces, the Public Security Department and Civil Defence Depart-

The JPA and Al Arab Al Yawm:

By Alia Shukri Hamzeh

AMMAN — Al Arab Al Yawm newspaper's board of directors and the Jordanian Press Association (JPA) are back at each other's throats over the crisis that commenced earlier this month when the daily fired 17

The JPA council had blasted the paper for firing the employees and said its arguments as presented by the paper's general manager. Adnan Husseini — who said the dismissals were necessary for "internal restructuring." and fell within an article of the Labour Law — were uncon-

It called for an open-ended sit-in in front of l Al Arab Al Yawm's building on Universi-

ty Street. The sit-in was to last until Al Arab Al Yawm's board of directors retracted the decision and reappointed those sacked. ing to informed sources, by Al Arab Al Yawm board chairman Riad Hroub. The sources said he has called on its owner to move it, claiming the sit-in

According to JPA council member Nidal Mansour, he and other colleagues went to the tent site Sunday morning to find it gone, with cars belonging to the newspaper board members and employees parked in its place.

After inquiring about the issue we found out that they (Al Arab Al Yawm board members) had called the owner of the tent saying the sit-in ended and asked him to take it down and tore the banners down from in front of it,"

In return the JPA council decided to set the tent back up. but were unable to because of the presence of cars parked at the site and the "uncordial" artitude of the owners of the

"We went to the Amman mayor and complained, and the director of the police was also notified of the situation," said Mansour adding that the mayor had asked Hroub and family members to back off

"We stopped the prime minister who was passing by and asked him to intervene in the said Hawamdeh, father of four and one of the sacked 17.

At it again He said that Prime Minister Abdur-Ra'uf S. Rawabdeh had ordered that the JPA council be permitted to set up the

tent again. "Your rights are protected within the law and the tent must be set up again," Hawamdeh quoted Rawabdeh as saying.

According to Mansour. another tent was brought and had "assumed position" in front of Al Arab Al Yawm by

"Many of our fellow journalists don't want to leave the tent, because they are afraid anomer attempt to bring it down," he added, saying the JPA council are still debating filing a lawsuit.

Mansour added that further measures, including calling for a strike, could be taken.

Hawamdeh described the situation of those sacked as "the grass that gets crushed under the feet of elephants fighting for power [within the herd)," saying the true victims are those sacked and that their livelihoods are at stake. "A solution to the problem

has to be found soon," he

stage peaceful sit-in on university campus

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN - Students at the Applied Science University on Sunday staged a peaceful sit-in inside the campus to protest what they described as the administration's refusal to implement their demands of more freedom and educational ser-

A representative of the students council, which organised the protest, told more than 300 students who attended the rally that the move was the beginning of a series of actions aimed at forcing the administration to agree to their demands.

A statement of the student council, distributed among students at the rally and entitled the "suffocation of students' will," accused the administration of barring student activities in the university.

"We request the administration deal seriously with our demands," said the onepage statement "the administration is trying to confine the student council, curb its freedom and abolish its existence," the statement

A copy of the statement was sent to His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Talal, president of the Higher Education Council, the

Lower House of Parliament and the Prime Minister's office.

Deputy chairman of the students council, Tareq Rababa'a, told participants that among the demands the administration has not responded to are the demand to hold a rally inside the campus, the demand to appoint a doctor to treat female students, and the demand that a health insurance policy for the university students be intro-

Rababa'a indicated that the student council might call for a general strike at the university if their demands are not met. He did not give a date for such an action.

duced.

"The sit-in is the first step in our campaign which will be intensified in the coming few days if the administration continues to ignore our demands," the student told his colleagues.

The council, controlled by students who sympathise with the Islamic movement, has repeatedly argued with the university's administra-

The administration has several actions against student spearheading the students activities in this university in the past

Jordan to host meeting of UNWRA donor countries

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan on Wednesday will host the unofficial annual meeting of representatives of donor countries and those hosting Palestinian refugees to, examine, refugee issues.

The two-day meeting, to be held at the Radisson SAS Hotel under the patronage of Prime Minister Abdur-Ra'uf S. Rawabdeh, will discuss the United Nations Relief Works tion, budget and services provided to Palestinian refugees.

UNRWA has allocated an additional \$40 million in in-kind assistance to this year's estimated \$322 million budget, which suffers from a \$60 million deficit.

At the meeting, which comes ahead of the U.N. General Assembly that must approve the UNRWA budget and cover its deficit, participants will review UNRWA's achievements, and examine its vision to establish social and economic projects to serve refugees in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Delegates will

review the agency's efforts to develop its administra-

Jordan spends \$350 million from its budget on direct and indirect assistance to refugees in educational, health, social and infrastructure fields.

Representatives of countries hosting Palestinian refugees will hold a preparatory meeting on Tuesday at the Palestinian Affairs Department to discuss the refugees' situations and economic obstacles facing them.

Out of 1.5 million refugees registered in Jordan, 18 per cent live in camps, according to UNRWA.

During the meeting, UNRWA employees are excepted to submit a memo, requesting donor countries to reconsider wages and appointments. Sources told Petra that

UNRWA's employees committee, which groups 22,000 workers, might escalate measures in case the meeting does not consider their demands.

Applied Science students | Water minister to travel to Syria

Water talks to focus on Wihdeh Dam

By Ahmad Khatib

AMMAN - Minister of Water and Irrigation Kamel Mahadin will leave for Syria on Saturday to discuss joint water issues, including the construction of the longawaited Wihdeh Dam on the Yannouk River.

Mahadin, who is currently in France "examining its experience in water projects," will review the dam's tender documents and feasibility study.

The dam, whose cost initially was estimated at JD283 million, then revised to JD152 million, is expected to have a storage capacity of 225 million cubic metres (mcm) of water and would help Jordan store additional water supplies from the Yarmouk River, which normally provides the Kingdom with 135 mcm annually.

The Yarmouk River, which begins in Syria, flows along the two countries' border and then joins the Jordan River downstream from Lake Tiberias. It reached its lowest level in recent history last week, according to the gov-

Information Minister Nasser Lawzi told reporters after Saturday's Cabinet session that Mahadin's trip aims to discuss means to provide the Kingdom with water from Syria after President Hafez Assad directed his government to share supplies with

Lawzi expressed optimism that water talks with Syria will result in providing Jordan with supplies to meet water shortage this summer.

water use is projected to reach around 10 per cent by the end of this year, since rainfall, which accounts 60 per cent of the Kingdom's annual water supply, dipped to just two per cent of the seasonal average in January, when Jordan officially

declared a state of drought. The government devised a three-scenario contingency plan to handle the water crisis, focusing on the Zai Water Treatment Plant, and on the Amman and Balga governorates, where the shortage is expected to be severe.

Lawzi said Jordan and Syria have agreed in principle that a joint committee will meet in June to discuss related issues.

Last year, in a joint committee meeting, Jordan and Syria agreed to proceed with the dam and set up an early warning system to monitor the quality of Yarmouk River water flowing into the Kingdom.

The Syrians, who then said they had plans to provide Amman with a weekly report on the quality of river water entering the Kingdom, agreed to set up several water stations to monitor the river's water before it reaches Jordan. Water experts complained in recent months about receiving low-quality water from the Yarmouk River because of wastewater that was leaking into the river's tributaries in Syria. The Kingdom has plans to construct a JD50 million wastewater treatment plant near the border.

Damascus has so far made no official comment on the Jordanian complaints, but Jordanian officials have said that Syria acknowledges the problem and that financial considerations do not allow the country to effectively

control water quality. The dam, part of an agreement signed in 1987, has been delayed by lack of funds, political tension between the two countries over their regional roles and Israeli reservations over the dam pending a regional peace settlement. The two sides said they are looking for means to secure funding for the project, whose construction is expected to take three and half years.

Syria also agreed to Jordan-ian demands to allow it to secure its full share of water coming from the river, estimated at 220 mcm, in line with an agreement reached in 1987 that was based on an Arab League agreement reached in 1955.

The water deal, devised by a special Arab League committee, set Jordan's annual share at 330 mem and Syria's at 90 mcm. Syria currently gets 220 mcm a year.

However, Jordanian officials said their country was only getting up to 135 mcm a year from the 1955 share.

Jordan won a Syrian pledge not to build new ditches along the Yarmouk River that would obstruct the flow of water to the Kingdom.

Syria has built 25 ditches inside its territory to store riverwater, a move Jordanian officials claim has helped reduce the flow of the river from 470 million cubic metres a year to 270 mcm near the Adassiyeh border

PM briefs House on King's recent tour of Arab states

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdur-Ra'uf S. Rawabdeh on Sunday met with Lower House members to brief them on His Majesty King Abdul-

lah's recent tour of some Arab states, an MP said. Deputy Salamah Hiyyari chamber that the visit to the Gulf states aimed to strengthen ties with these states and to explain Jordan's economic

plight.
The premier indicated that the tour aimed to boost relations with these states and discuss with them how they could assist Jordan to ease its economic crisis," the MP told

the Jordan Times. Among these options were the employment of more Jordanians in the Gulf, initiating joint ventures in Jordan and depositing some foreign currency at the Central Bank of Jordan to enhance its foreign

reserves, Hiyyari added. The deputy quoted Rawabdeh as saving that among the projects that might interest businessmen in the Gulf was the purchase of "some shares of the Jordan Telecommunications Company, especially by Mahadin and his Syrian coungovernmental committee put

Talks with Gulf officials also focused on enhancing Jordanian exports to these states, especially agricultural

exports. The Jordan News Agency, boosting inter-Arab ties."

During his visit to Syria, with whom ties soured following Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel, the Jordanian delegation reviewed the 1975 trade protocol and proposed the amendment of the 24year-old protocol, Rawabdeh

The premier indicated that talks with the Syrians also centred on the construction of \$225 million Al Wihdeh Dam on the Yarmouk River to detainees in Syrian jails. ease Jordan's water shortage problem.

told the agency

financing the project especially at the Arab economic agencies," the premier told the

Water Minister Karnal almost 300, a Jordanian non-UAE businessmen who had terpart will meet next week to the figure at as many as 700.

good experience in this sector in their country." finalise studies of the project, which will generate electric power to Syria.

Rawabdeh noted that Syria also expressed its willingness to help Jordan in overcoming the expected water shortage next summer by allowing the Petra, quoted the premier as Kingdom to use a Syrian dam saying that the tour stems in the southern city of Dera'a, an additional 8.5 million cubic metres of water to the King-

The prime minister said that a Jordanian technical team will visit Syria to discuss the "means to transfer water from the Syrian dam to the Kingdom."

Deputy Hiyyrai said Rawabdeh told legislators that Syrian officials have expressed willingness to discuss the issue of Jordanian prisoners and

"The premier told us Syria is ready to release some prison-"The Syrians have ers and that the matter could expressed their readiness to be discussed by bilateral comlobby [along with Jordan] for mittees to reach a breakthrough on this issue," the deputy said.

While government figures showed that Jordanian prison-He noted that Jordanian ers in Syria are estimated at

Justice Ministry studies files of 2,600, may reduce prison terms in lieu of amnesty

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN - Ministry of Justice Harnza Haddad on Sunday described the government's approach to the special amnesty which aims to reduce the sentences of thousands of prisoners who did not benefit from last month's general amnesty.

Haddad said his ministry is studying the files of thousands of prisoners and is expected to issue recommendation to the Council of Ministers to reduce their sentences.

The minister declined to specify whether or not political cases would be included, but said all "cases will be reviewed without exception." "We have ended a compre-

hensive study of most of these cases and our report will be submitted to the Cabinet soon," the ministry told the Jor-

He indicated that Public Security Department has supplied the ministry with "thousands names" of prisoners who received different jail terms. "We are considering all these cases. We cannot tell who will

benefit from the amnesty, but the general trend is to reduce their sentences, which first requires a Royal Decree," the minister added.

The minister said that the cases of 2,600 detainees are being studied.

The Cabinet on Saturday recommended to His Majesty King Abdullah to reduce the sentences of tens of juveniles currently serving different jail terms in correctional and rehabilitation centres.

Last month, King Abdullah issued a general amnesty to more than 3,000 prisoners and detainees, but political prison-

The amnesty also excluded those who committed what the court described as "terrorist acts," especially those indicted in the case known as the case of the Arab Afghans, who were convicted for attacking the intelligence office in Baqaa Refugee camp.

The general amnesty also excluded Ahmad Dakamseh. the Jordanian soldier who shot and killed seven Israeli schoolgirls on March 1997,

Relatives of prisoners not included in the amnesty staged sit-ins near the Royal Court and the Ministry of Justice to demand the release of their kin.

The general amnesty also excluded those involved in rape, pre-meditated murder. forgery, embezzlement, theft issuance of bad cheques and some other cases.

However, no signs of leniency in the paper's attitude was seen. Rather, the paper has but they did not budge. brought the tent down, accord-

NEWS IN BRIEF

King meets Kaabneh AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Abdullah on Sunday paid a visit to the Armed Forces headquarters. He was received by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Marei Kaabneh and other senior officers. King Abdullah

King condoles Hweitat tribe

reviewed with Kaabneh issues concerning the Armed Forces.

AMMAN (Petra) - His Majesty King Abdullah on Sunday paid a visit to Ma'an governorate where he offered his condolences to Hweitat tribe over the death of Sattam Faisal Jazi. The family thanked the King for his visit. Meanwhile, HRH Prince Hassan on Sunday also offered condolences over the death of Jazi. The family expressed appreciation for Prince Hassan's gesture.

Jordan remembers Queen Zein

AMMAN (Petra) - Jordanians on Monday will remember the late Queen Zein, the mother of the late King Hussein, who was laid to rest five years ago.

Public holiday announced

AMMAN (Petra) --- All ministries and public department will be closed on Saturday, May 1, in observance of Labour Day, according to a communique issued on Saturday by Prime Minister Abdur-Ra uf S. Rawabdeh.

Kuwaiti justice minister arrives

AMMAN (Petra) - Kuwaiti Minister of Justice. Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ahmad Khaled Al Kulaib arrived in Amman on Sunday for a three-day visit, in which he will deliver a written message to His Majesty King Abdullah from Kuwaiti Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah. During his trip, Al Kulaib will participate in the 9th Zakat seminar on Monday.

WHAT'S GOING ON

"Al Koura District" by Ahmad Shreideh at the Friends of Archae ology Centre on Tuesday April 27 at 6:30 p.m. (Telefax 5930682). "13th Century Lessons for Muslim-Christian Dialogue" by Dr. L. Michael Spath at the Fulbright House, Shmeisani on Tuesday April 27 (4:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.) (Tel. 4618053).

French film "Vivement Dimanche" at the French Cultural

Centre, Jabal Weibdeh at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. "Sense and Sensibility" at the British Council, Jabal Ammar on Tuesday April 27 at 6:00 p.m. (Children's film "The Page Mas-ter" will also be screened on Wednesday April 28 at 5:00 p.m.) "The Jackel" at Books@Café, Jabal Amman on Tuesday April 27 at 8:30 p.m. (Tel. 4650457/8).

DOCUMENTARY ON POVERTY

"Poverty: The Human Dimension" - Radio Jordan's documentary at 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (The programme, broadcast every Monday at these times, attempts to shed light on the different dimensions of poverty in Jordan.)

Lebanese Films Children of Shatilla." The Kidnapped, and "Muscles" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman, on Tuesday April 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Exhibitin of Palestinian embroidery at the Royal Cultural Centre, until May 9. Seventh Annual Book Exhibition at the Bishop's School,

Jabal Amman, until April 29. Display of Iraq Al Amir collection at the Jordan Design and Trade Centre of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation until April 29.

Thousands protest silently outside China central government HQ

Thousands of people stood silently shoulder to shoulder on streets outside China's central government headquarters Sunday to demand the right to practice a system of meditation taught by a martial arts master living in the United

It was the largest demonstration in the 10 years since the military crushed the Tiananmen Square democracy demonstrations.

More than 10,000 people crowded the sidewalks for about two-and-a-half kilometres along the streets north and west of Zhongnanhai, the walled compound where China's top leaders work just west of the imperial palace, or Forbidden City.

Demonstrators also gathered near the main gate on the south side of the compound, a short distance from Tiananmen Square on the avenue of Eternal Peace, the city's main east-

west thoroughfare. legal protection for practising falun gong, said a young protester who gave his family name, Sun.

Officials in some areas were "meddling" and preventing people from practising falun, he said.

Falun gong has 70 million to 100 million adherents throughout China according to a government estimate. The group was founded in 1992 by Li Hongzhi, a Chinese native who now lives in New York and lectures in the United States and other countries, but no longer in China.

Falun is a school of qigong, a system of con-trolled breathing, martial arts, meditation and healing that has been popular in China since bans on cultural traditions were lifted in the late 1970s. The government sanctions qigong as a unique Chinese tradition. but condemns some charismatic qigong masters for using superstition to fool

The government is studying falun and has not yet reached a conclusion on whether it is an acceptable school of qigong, Wang Kai, an official in charge of qigong under the state sports administration, said Sunday. He declined to comment further.

The gathering began early in the morning in response to critics who call falun a superstition or religion, said a woman running a

nearby kiosk. The government should give falun a "legal environment," said a middle-aged man in the crowd. He declined to give his name or say more, and nervously told a reporter in a low voice, "go now." Many others refused to say anything.

The crowd apparently was worried that the government would ban falun. A one-page statement from the government handed out to demonstrators late in the afternoon said those fears were based on rumours that should be ignored.

Communist Party has tried to prevent any large protests that could get out of control and stir up people who are angry over rising unemployment to challenge the party's monopoly on power. But the demonstrators who suddenly appeared on the streets Sunday did not complain about political or economic

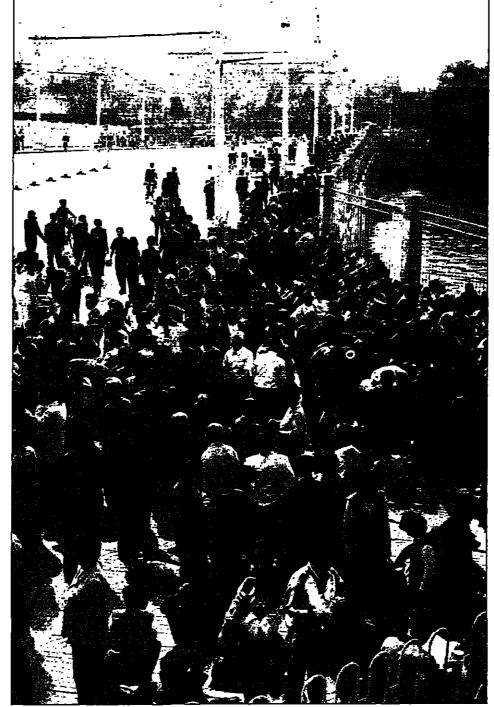
conditions. Police stopped traffic that earlier clogged Wenjin street as drivers gawked. Crowds of police guarded the gates of the leadership compound, and others spread out to watch the crbwd.

The demonstrators stood on sat along the streets as if waiting for a parade. None held signs or leaflets or cried out demands. Near the main gate of the goverhment headquarters many sat and read a book of Li's

Followers say falun is not religion, but a system of meditation and exercise that brings them good health. Critics have said Li claims to be more important than Buddha or Jesus and that falun could become a cult.

People of all ages, including many who were middle-aged or older, stood or sat quietly on the sidewalks. They did not block the streets.

Some sat on pieces of cardboard or folded blankets, and a few held shirts or umbrellas for shade from the glare on a bot day under



Followers of religious cult leader Li Hongzhi besiege the Zhongnanhai leadership compound (background) in Beijing April 25. Tens of thousands of followers of the Fa Lun Gong cult demanded to see Premier Zhu Rongji to express anger over media criticism of their discipline (Reuters photo)

Li tells followers that they can achieve enlightenment and protection from by the dozens or hundreds evil forces through falun. by the dozens or hundreds in parks, department store

a cloudless sky gray with In Beijing, "master Li" is smog. In Beijing, "master Li" is revered by followers who read his books, listen to his and taped lectures and gather

parking lots and other public places. They exercise meditate together openly in public, near large

Former apartheid general sues de Klerk for libel

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — South African President Klerk is being sued for libel by an apartheid-era general over comments he made about the military in his

autobiography, a newspaper reported Sunday. A summons on de Klerk, issued by General Chris Thirion, was signed by the registrar of the Pretoria High Court on Friday, Afrikaans-language Rapport newspaper said.

Thirion, former deputy head of military intelligence, was one of 16 military officers fired by de Klerk in December 1992 after evidence emerged what the then president described in his book as "a rat's nest of unauthorised and unlawful actions by military intelligence.

In the book, "The Last Trek — A New Beginning," de Klerk said he had asked General Pierre Steyn, the erstwhile head of the

that the military was targeting members of the African National Congress (ANC) and National other liberation groups then involved in constitutional talks with the

apartheid government. De Klerk wrote that Steyn had sketched a "complicated picture of unauthorised, unlawful and criminal activities in some units of the defence

Among those involved in these activities were those who could not rid themselves of the "albatross" of their anti-ANC sentiments, and those who were following their "own agendas" against de Klerk's government because it was negotiating with people previously regarded as the enemy.

According to Thirion, it is widely known that he was one of two generals sacked and therefore people reading the book would associate him with criminal and unlawful

defence force, to investi- activities, and with gate widespread claims efforts to undermine the state.

> Thirion asked de Klerk to charge him in a court of law so allegations against him could be tested. This was never done.

In the summons, the newspaper said, Thirion, regarded as one of South Africa's most brilliant generals and now a restauranteur, claims that he has suffered damage to his "reputation, integrity and honesty."

De Klerk, who ruled from 1989, stepped down from power after his National Party was overwhelmed by Nelson Mandela's African National Congress at the historic all-race elections in 1994.

De Klerk quit politics in June 1997 soon after leading his NP out of Mandela's government of national unity. Since then he has become a speaker on the international circuit.

International Court of Justice scrutinises Malaysia

of Justice (ICJ) arrived in Malaysia for a weeklong visit to scrutinise the judicial system following global condemnation of the trial of ousted politician Anwar Ibrahim, news reports said Sunday.

A team of three representatives from the Hague-based group will study the independence of Malaysia's judiciary based on international guidelines set by the United Nations. the New Straits Times reported.

Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, meanwhile, lashed out at foreigners for criticising the nation's courts, saying Malaysia considered it "interfering in the country's internal affairs.

"Who are they to question the fairness of the courts and the country's laws," he was quoted as saying on Sunday by the national Bernama news agency. It was unclear if the comment referred directly to the visiting jurists. The delegation, which

International Bar Association Judges Forum. He was accompanied by Zimbabwe supreme court judge N.J. McNally and ICJ commissioner for India Rajeev Dhavan.

A draft report on the group's findings will be given to the Malaysian govemment for comment before a final report is handed to the International Court Justice.

Deputy Prime Minister in the prime minister's department Ibrahim Ali met on Saturday with the group. He briefed the jurists on Anwar's case and other issues including Malaysia's internal security act, which allows detention without trial.

The group also planned to meet with members of the legal community.

International jurist and human rights groups have denounced Anwar's sevenmonth trial and verdict. Amnesty international called Anwar a "prisoner of con-

LUMPUR. arrived on Saturday. was based Lawyers Committee Malaysia (AP) — Jurists headed by Lord Abernathy, for Human Rights said the from the International Court the chairman of the case amounted to political persecution.

Anwar's 78-day trial ended April 14 when the popular former No. 2 leader was sentenced to six years in jail. Anwar has denied the charges against him, saying they were crafted to end his challenge to Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

During the trial, Anwar's defence lawyers repeatedly threatened to walk out after rulings in favour of the prosecution. The trial judge barred Anwar's lawyers from using political conspiracy as a defence and held one of the lead defence attorneys in contempt of court.

The visiting jurists intend to examine other high-profile human rights cases.

Lim Guan Eng. an opposition lawmaker, was sentenced last year to 18 months in iail for criticising the government's handling of a rape case. Irene Fernandez, a leading human rights activist, is on trial for 'falsely accusing police" of torturing illegal immigrants.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Leading Nigerian politician wants to foster 'Yoruba nation'

LAGOS (AFP) — A leading Nigerian politician who failed to win his party's ticket for the February presidential elections has said his aim now is to bring about a new Yoruba nation within Nigeria. Bola Ige, a former governor of old Oyo State, and a leading figure in Nigerian politics, said before the election that he wanted to play a role in national affairs. Ige has long been seen however as a nationalist Yoruba, one of Nigeria's three largest ethnic groups long militating for a greater voice in the country's political affairs. And the lawyer politician, who was beaten by for-mer Finance Minister Olu Falae for the presidential ticket of the southwest-based Alliance for Democracy, told this Sunday's edition of the newspaper Punch he believed God had not wanted him to play the role of president. "I believe that maybe God wants me to accentuate my activities in that maybe God wants me to accentuate my activities in bringing about the Yoruba nation within the Federal Republic of Nigeria so that the Yoruba nation will be an example to all the other nations in Nigeria, "he said. "I want a Nigeria that is truly federal, in which the Yorubas who must be the benchmark for the entire Nigeria, are not only well governed but keep their civilisation," he said. "Yorubaland will be what you copy in Nigeria." Nigeria is home to more than 200 ethno-linguistic groups, of which the three largest are the Yorubas, Ibos and Hausa-speakers. Since the 1967-70 civil war in which Ibo separatists were defeated, talk of ethnic separatism has been largely taboo in the country.

Afghan opposition says fighting continues around Bamiyan

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's Northern Alliance said Sunday the opposition and the Taleban militia were locked in fighting around Behsoud, about 100 kilometres south east of Bamiyan. "Our commanders from central Afghanistan have confirmed fierce fighting in Kotal-i-Shebar, Kotal-i-Haji Gak (next to Behsoud) and Dar-i-Shekari," Harakat-i-Islami and opposition spokesman. Saad Mohseni, said. The Harakat-i-Islami is one political faction in the alliance. He said in a statement that fighting had also flared again in north west Faryab province where opposition troops had briefly cut supply routes to the main centres of Sheberghan and Maimana. The fighting follows the fall of Bamiyan in central Afghanistan to the Hezb-i-Wahdat faction of the opposition last Wednesday. "With the recent fall of Bamiyan city, there is new impetus in the northern provinces of Samangan, Sare Pol, Balkh, Faryab and Jauzjan to repel the Taliban armies," Mohseni said. The Taleban militia controls about 75 per cent of Afghanistan after six years of civil war. Meanwhile, the alliance has rejected reports that an Iranian plane — delivering supplies to anti-Taleban troops — was forced down by the militia over Afghan air space. "The story is absolutely untrue. No flight has taken place from Iran to Bamiyan, it is part of a campaign of disinformation," opposition spokesman Abdullah said. The Taleban has declined to comment on the report and no mention has been made in reference to Barniyan by the local official media.

Kampala bomb blast death toll rises to four

KAMPALA (AFP) — A policewoman injured in Saturday evening's bomb blast in the Ugandan capital died Sunday, bringing the number of fatalities to four, police said. Three people died instantly and 14 others were injured when the device exploded at just before 8.00 (1700 GMT) about 150 injured were still in hospital Sunday and four were said to be in serious condition. Witnesses said a local pro-government militiaman had been shot dead in the area minutes before, and that the bomb exploded as police were removing his body. But police spokesman John Kinera was unable to confirm the shooting. 'I was standing there when the bomb went off." Mohammed Kajoba, 30, of the Crime Prevention Unit, told AFP. "I was hit in the leg and the arm. I ran a few metres, then I collapsed." Kinera said police had not yet established what kind of device was used in the attack and that no group had claimed responsibility. "It should be the same people responsible for the blasts earlier this year," Kinera told AFP. Bomb blasts have become frequent in the Ugandan capital, most attributed to rebels of the Allied Democratic Forces, a small group dominated by Islamic fundamentalists fighting mainly in western Uganda against the government of President Yoweri Museveni. Other attacks have been blamed on a tiny associated group, the Uganda National Army for the Liberation of Uganda More than 45 people have died in bomb blasts in and around Kampala since 1997.

Police clash with demonstrators in Bangladesh; 20 injured

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) - Riot police fired teargas shells on Sunday to stop hundreds of demonstrators from marching into the prime minister's office protesting utility problems, witnesses said. At least 20 people, including two policemen, were injured in the clashes during which the protesters from the student wing of the country's main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party set off crude homemade bombs, according to witnesses. The clashes occurred at downtown Bangla motor district, where police erected barbed-wire barricades, a few blocks from Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's office. In a bid to overrun the barricades, the demonstrators attacked police with rocks and homemade bombs. Police responded with teargas shells. Police detained at least 15 demonstrators. Opposition parties led by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia accuse Hasina's three-year-old government of failure to ensure regular supply of electricity. Bangladesh produces about 1.900 megawatts of power a day, nearly 400 megawatts less than the demand. The deficit causes frequent power outages compounding people's sufferings in the summer.

British citizen shot dead in Johannesburg house

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — A British citizen was shot dead and his wife seriously wounded when they were attacked by two armed men in their house here overnight, police said Sunday. A police spokesman said Roger Previtt, 49, and his wife, 47, and their two children were asleep when the intruders entered the house. Previtt's wife heard a noise and, on investigating, was shot in both legs, the stomach and neck. The attackers struggled with Roger Previtt in the master bedroom, forcing him to the floor and shooting him in the back of the head. The two children were unharmed and the killers fled without taking anything. Previtt's wife was admitted to hospital in a serious but stable condition. The motive for the attack is not known.

Dili calm in wake of agreement on Timor

DILI. East Timor (AFP) — The East Timorese capital was calm on Sunday following the agreement on autonomy hammered out for the territory at the United Nations between Indonesia

and Portugal, U.S. Ambassador to Jakarta, Stappleton Roy arrived here for a visit of a "few days" which he said was aiming at gathering the views of the various factions in East Timor.

"I am here with full (Indonesian) government approval... I am here because I haven't been here for a year and I thought it would be useful to come back again," Roy said shortly after alighting from a small propeller plane at Dili's Komoro airport.

Roy, who was accompanied by three other U.S.

diplomats, including the defence attaché, said that he was to meet with Belo later Sunday while the rest of the his agenda was "still being

set up. Shops were open and people were back on the streets here Sunday. Public transport was also functioning again, an AFP photographer

Dili's Bishop, Nobel laureate Carlos Ximenes Felipe Belo conducted a Sunday mass at his residence with some 300 people in atten-

After two days of talks at United Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas and his Portugueșe counterpart Jaime Gama agreed an autonomy package for East Timor Friday.

The agreement, which is

May 5, includes a plan to hold a direct ballot on autonomy by some 800,000 East Timorese. But there was no agreement on security arrangements for the vote and the arrangements for the vote itself as Alatas had asked to consult Jakarta on both points.

The people of East Timor would be consulted in July or August on whether they will accept the proposal and if rejected. Jakarta has said it will allow the former Portuguese colony annexed in 1976 to go.

"I think people have only read or heard about the accord today, it has not sunk in yet," said Carlos Guterres. a local NGO activist.

Guterres said that in his view and those of many of

expected to be signed on his friends, an international presence, be that a peace keeping or police force, was urgently needed to halt the current violence in East

> "I do not think anybody else can resolve the issue (of violence)," he said adding that although it was not a policy of the Indonesian armed forces, some elements of the military in East Timor had no interest in a peaceful East Timor.

> "There is no comment at this stage. The agreement has not been signed yet and changes may still take place," said the chairman of the human rights watchdog. The Foundation for Human Rights and Justice, Aniceto Guterres.

Guterres said that by noon Sunday he had not received any report of violence in

Dili or elsewhere in the territory. But the chairman of

Impettu, the Association of East Timorese Students, Mariano Sabino Lopes, dismissed the agreement in New York as "meaningless." "They can reach whatever agreement outside of East Timor but what is important

is what is happening here." said Lopes. "Although Dili is relatively quiet, in the districts pressure and violence against pro-independence supporters continue with harass-

ment and abductions," Lopes said. He added that for his organisation, the agreement was on something offered by the Indonesian government, not what the people in East Timor wanted — inde-

"Whatever it is, we still are of the opinion that as long as Indonesia is still occupying East Timor, we will keep on struggling for independence," he said. East Timor was invaded

by Indonesia in 1975 and annexed a year later in a move never recognised by the United Nations, which continues to view Portugal as the region's administering power.

The accord comes on the heels of a peace agreement signed Wednesday in the East Timor capital by pro-Indonesian and pro-independence factions in the territory. Tension and violence between the two camps has risen following Jakarta's surprise announcement in January that it may let East Timor go if the autonomy package is rejected.

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WS IN BRIEF World News

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A young monk holds a portrait of the 11th Panchen Lama, allegedly the youngest political prisoner in the world, during a demonstration on the eve of his 10th birthday, at Swoyambhu Nath stupa in Kathmandu April 25, 1999. Gendum Choekyi Nyima was recognised as the 11th Panchen Lama by the Dalai Lama in May 1995, after which he was allegedly abducted by Chinese security forces and has never been heard from again (AFP photo)

Tibetans celebrate Panchen Lama's birthday, demand his release

More than 1,500 Tibetans gathered here Sunday to celebrate the tenth birthday of the Panchen Lama and call for Chinese authorities to release him from house

Tibetan monks and devotees lit lamps and released balloons during the gathering at the historic Swoyambhu Buddhist monastery in the Nepalese

They distributed leaflets

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, instead by the Chinese the second most important spiritual leader for Tibetan Buddhists after the Dalai Lama. He was born on April 25, 1989.

In 1995 he was recognised by the Dalai Lama as the incarnation of the previous Panchem Lama but Beijing refused to recognise that choice and took him and his family to another province where he remains under guard.

y distributed leaflets Another boy, Gyaincain photographs of Norbu, was designated

authorities. Despite massive propaganda on Beijing's part, its official Panchen Lama is still viewed with suspicion in Tibet.

"The detention of young Panchen Lama by the Chinese leaders clearly indicates that the human rights situation in Tibet is very grim," said Samdup Lhatse of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies which organised the gath-

Lama is to identify the reincarnation of the Dalai

release. "The Chinese leaders have no justification whatsoever to hold the young Panchen Lama and his family in detention," it

The group's leaflet described the Panchen

Lama as "the youngest

political prisoner in the

world," and demanded his

One of the most important roles of the Panchen

ICRC chief to visit places hit by NATO bombs

BELGRADE (AFP) — The state radio Belgrade reported. president of the International Committee of the Red Cross hit by bombing, to see the dam-(ICRC) met Sunday with top age. That is my programme for Yugoslav Red Cross officials today," he told the radio. before visiting northern Serbian town damaged in NATO bombing campaign.

chief Comelio Sommaruga, who arrived here late Saturday, was to visit Novi Sad, the capital of Serbian northem province of Vojvodina, seriously damaged in series of NATO air strikes, state agency Tanjug reported.

Sommaruga said he would not give any press briefings before meeting top Yugoslav officials. "I am interested to visit places

He said he already "had lot of information from my delegation here, but I think I should see everything by myself," the radio

Sommaruga was due to meet with Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic to request that Red Cross officials be allowed to visit the three U.S. soldiers who have been held for nearly a month.

Sergeant Staff Andrew Sergeant

Specialist Corporal Steven minister Maksim Korac as well March 31 by Yugoslav troops agency said but did not give near the Yugoslav-Macedonian details of the talks. border.

The ICRC has been demanding access to the three, who Yugoslav authorities consider as prisoners of war.

Before leaving for Novi Sad, Sommaruga met with Yugoslav Red Cross chief Radovan Mijanovich, Tanjug said, "expressing the ICRC readiness to be engaged in providing humanitarian aid to all those

who need it." Late Saturday, Sommanuga

Christopher Stone, 25, and met with Yugoslav deputy health Gonzales, 24, were captured on as other state officials, the

Sommanuga was expected to asked Milosevic to allow the ICRC to resume its relief work in Kosovo, the province Red Cross delegates had left upon the start of NATO air raids on

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), as well as the ICRC and other aid agencies fear that thousands of displaced within the southern Serbian province were facing lack of food, medicines and shelters.

> the poll found. Seventy per cent of

Littleton, newsstands on Monday.

blame the availability of

Colorado.

call for reducing violence in popular entertainment.

effective, the poll said. The poll is part of Newsweek's cover story "Why? Portraits of the Killers; The Science of Teen Violence." It found the public divided over the main reason for children committing such violence, with 36 per cent blaming poor upbringing, and 34

biological tendencies towards violence. Majorities also want to

see more done to monitor Internet web sites and identify potentially violent individuals, the poll

For the poll, Princeton Research interviewed

Congo's Tutsis talk peace with enemy tribe

In a bid to restore peace in Congo, the Congolese Tutsis have agreed with enemy tribes on measures aimed at building trust and securing access to pastures previously shut off in months of civil war.

southern Congo are fighting to overthrow Congolese President Laurent kabila, while rival tribes have often allied themselves with progovernment militias. In a communiqué from

the eastern Congolese town of Bukavu, the Tutsi group, known as Banyamulenge, said Friday the agreement allowed the Banyamulenge herders to reach previously inaccessible areas in south Kivu province. Other tribes could now visit markets in Tutsi-controlled areas along The Tutsi minority in the mountainous high plateau which were off lim-

> Inter-communal tensions in the volatile eastern Congo. stemming from land disputes since the

its since the August civil

arrival of Tutsis from Rwanda centuries ago, were partially to blame for Congo's two wars in two

former dictator Both Mobutu Sese Seko and Kabila have refused the ethnic Tutsis, believed to be numbering about half a million, the right to citizenship, vote and political affiliation. That has often incited other tribes to ethnic hatred against what they said were foreign invaders.

expulsion and

of hundreds of

neighbouring Rwanda to send troops and arms in support of the Congolese rebels both in 1996 and again in August 1998, when Kabila ordered the Rwandan army, which helped topple Mobutu, out

Banyamulenge groups have distanced themselves from whom they Rwanda. accused of fomenting ethnic tensions, and organised several community peace

Philippine Communists free last of 5 captives

Communist insurgents released the last of five military and police hostages Sunday, a move that is expected to pave the way for a resumption of peace talks, officials and witnesses said.

New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas turned over Sergeant Wivino Demol to representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and an independent church-led mission in a village at the foot of Sierra Madre mountain range outside Laguna province, south of Manila.

Demol, an army intelligence veteran, was later reunited with his tearful wife, Ligaya, and two young children after a physician declared him fit.

Asked by reporters how he felt and what he would like to

MANILA (AFP) — Philippine do, Demol said: "I can't say yet, I am still very confused. But I want first to have my kids

enrolled in school." He said the NPA rebels treated him well during his 14month captivity and "observed the comprehensive agreement on international humanitarian

He thanked President Joseph Estrada and Senator Loren Legarda, who he said helped facilitate his safe release.

He heaped praise on Communist Party founder Jose Maria Sison, who is in exile in the Netherlands, for living up to his word in releasing him.

"They did not harm me and they observed human rights," Demol said.

He was released shortly after noon to the ICRC representatives who later handed him over to a Church-led mission and other officials including Legarda and Laguna Governor Joey Lina, Romeo Capulong, a legal adviser to Communists earlier said.

Demol, abducted in February 1998, is the last of five hostages to be released by the NPA, the armed wing of the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines waging a 30-year war with Manila.

A "people's court" by the NPA had found him guilty of espionage, although his sentence was "suspended" when he expressed guilt and pledged to retire from military service, Demol said.

The NPA in the last two weeks freed an army general, a captain, another sergeant and a police inspector who were snatched in a string of abductions beginning February this

President Estrada suspended peace talks and revoked safety conduct passes for Communist leaders engaged in the negotiations following the latest round of kidnappings. He also refused to negotiate the release of the However, Senator Legarda

and an independent church-led mission secured the release of the hostages in a meeting with exiled Communist leaders in the Netherlands in March.

Estrada ordered a ceasefire from March 28 to April 19 to pave the way for the release of all hostages, but Demol's was delayed because of allegations by the guerrillas that the military was continuing its operations despite the president's

Don't park N. Irish peace process, Sinn Fein says

on Sunday said a peace agreement for Northern Ireland would be shattered if the process was "parked" over the summer.

"Our view is if you park the peace process there will be no good Friday agreement to come back to," Mitchel McLaughlin, chairman of the IRA's political wing, told BBC television in an interview that was to be broadcast later on Sunday.
"I think we are already in

a very deep crisis and clearly each day that we fail to find agreement on setting up the political structures, the political institutions, then that crisis will deepen,"

Ireland's deputy foreign minister, speaking on the same programme, agreed halted.

A stalemate over the scrapping of guerrilla arms has stalled last year's landmark Good Friday agreement, which committed all signatories to use their influence to get weapons handed over by May 2000.

Weeks of talks between parties have got nowhere and British and Irish Prime Ministers Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern are likely to resume talks with the leaders of all the province's main parties next week.

Last week, a spokesman for Blair said there was no question of sidelining the peace process but with agreement still elusive, speculation is rife that Blair and Ahern will suspend the agreement for some time rather than risk further dam-

age.
Liz O'Donnell, Irish deputy foreign minister, told the BBC the next two or three weeks would be critical. "I don't think we have the luxury of parking this process, I feel we have to continue," she said.

The Good Friday deal satisfied Protestants by maintaining British sovereignty but with some home rule but also kept alive Catholic dreams of a united Ireland by blurring the border with the Irish republic through a number of all-island institu-

John Hume, Nobel Peace Prize winner and member of the Democratic Catholic SDLP, on Saturday said he had come up with a new proposal in a bid to end the row over decommissioning. His plan would involve a aimed at assuring the entire community that a planned coalition administration for the province would operate "in a totally peaceful atmosphere".

But the leader of Northern Ireland's Protestants effectively rejected the idea that a deadlock in peace talks could be broken by such a declaration.

"Words, while they are fine, are not enough by themselves.

There need to be deeds as well," Ulster Unionist Party head David Trimble, who is also the province's new first minister, told Reuters.

Trimble is refusing to work with Sinn Fein in the new coalition until the IRA starts decommissioning, something the guerrillas

4,000 more refugees in Macedonia over weekend

GENEVA (AFP) — Some 4,000 more Kosovo refugees arrived in Macedonia this weekend, the U.N. refugee agency (UNHCR) said Sunday, while more than 10,000 crossed into Albania from

Montenegro this week. UNHCR spokeswoman Judith Kumin said 1,800 refugees arrived in Blace, on the Kosovo-Macedonia border, early Sunday, joining 2,200 others who had arrived the day before. The new arrivals brought the number of Kosovo refugees in the former Yugoslay republic to 137,000, the U.N. agency said, which is calling for permission to

UNHCR spokeswoman in Albania, Skopje, said the existing camps were overstretched and that the agency was asking for the green light to build three extra camps to accommodate 30,000 people.

One of the camps is under construction at Cegrane, south of Tetovo, a large northern town with a mostly ethnic Albanian population. More than refugees have arrived in Macedonia since NATO launched its air campaign against Yugoslavia on March 24, although some have been sent on to other countries such as Turkey

UNHCR spokesman Ahmad Mousabir, said that more than 10,000 Kosovars had arrived from Montenegro, Serbia's smaller partner in federal Yugoslavia, between

He said that "2,500 arrived on Tuesday, 1,500 on Wednesday, 2,800 on Thursday, 2,000 on Friday and 1,500 on Saturday". Mousabir said that 68,000 ethnic Albanians had fled Kosovo to Montenegro in

the past month, adding that it was mostly these refugees who were now heading for Albania. He said some of the latest

In Shdodra, northern killings by Serb forces starting to move among the largconcentrations refugees in Montenegro last Sunday and Monday.

They also spoke of tension between Serb forces and Montenegrin police. Last Sunday unidentified men in uniform opened fire on a column of refugees in Montenegro, killing six and

wounding several others Mousabir said 33,965 Kosovar refugees had crossed into Albania from Montenegro since March 24 but that many had moved on to other parts of the country. There were 20,190

refugees registered in the town of Shkoder, near the Montenegro border, he said.

'Half of Americans favour handgun bans following shootings'

NEW YORK (AFP) -Fifty per cent of Americans favour banning handguns following last week's high school massacre in Colorado — the highest proportion since 1982, according to a new Newsweek magazine poll. Nearly three quarters think stricter gun control laws would reduce violent crime in the United States greatly (33 per cent) or at least a little (38 per cent),

Americans believe a lack of parental oversight contributed "a lot" to the recent school shooting in according to the poll in the issue of Newsweek hitting Another 67 per cent

guns in the United States, the poll found. About half (49 per cent) believe the most effective way to prevent such violent incidents would be paying more attention to kids' antisocial attitudes and behaviour, while 21 per cent want increased school security, and 14 per cent

Just 11 per cent say passing stricter gun control laws would be most

per cent citing exposure to violence in the media. Fifteen per cent cited

peer pressure, while five per cent blamed genetic or

> Survey Associates 757 number of adults. aged 18 and over, between April 22-23, 1998. The margin of error is plus or minus four percentage

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Time Bomb explodes May 15.

Bangladesh: 20 injured

clash with demonstrator

tish citizen shot dead in ? Johannesburg house

Dr. James J. Zogby

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Silencing the media

REGARDLESS OF whether one believes in the legality, necessity or morality of the NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia, it is difficult to dispute the fact that civilian parties are entitled to protection against military action carried out by either side in the conflict. Certainly, the foremost civilian victims of the bombing campaign have been the ethnic Albanians of Kosovo, who have been systematically forced out of their homes by Serb forces taking advantage of the NATO strikes as a pretext for their actions, if the accounts of thousands of refugees are to be believed. Other civilian parties have been affected as well, including the ICRC, which has not been able to function inside of Yugoslavia since the bombing began, and similar humanitarian agencies. But the second civilian target of the NATO-Yugoslav conflict has undoubtedly been the media.

One day after the beginning of the NATO air strikes, Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, in the opening shot of this battle against the media, ordered all Western media out of Kosovo and effectively limited their presence to Belgrade, thus depriving the world of information on what is going on in the troubled province. Soon thereafter, the editor of a leading opposition newspaper in Belgrade was shot dead by unknown assailants. A number of ethnic Albanian journalists from Kosovo, speaking in various foreign countries, gave their accounts of the alleged Serbian atrocities in the province and how they had to escape to relay them. As of late, Milosevic has stepped up his efforts to silence dissent in his country, serving arrest warrants to two opposition journalists from Montenegro, a province of Yugoslavia. The two have been forced into hiding for fear of "torture" at the hands of the Yugoslav army in the event of their capture.

NATO also has a few things for which it must answer. Friday's attack on the offices of Serbian Radio and Television in downtown Belgrade was truly incomprehensible and, as Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini said, "terrible." While the destruction of Milosevic's house could be described as having been done in bad taste, the bombing of a civilian structure, which left at least 10 people dead, cannot be explained as having served any useful purpose. Even if Serb television can be described as a centre that disseminates "hateful propaganda," as several NATO leaders termed it to justify the attack, it is under the entire control of Milosevic's government. Even if it had been permanently knocked off the air, which it wasn't, the Serbian public would have seen it as simply censorship of different kind than to which it is accustomed. Finally, not every journalist can be counted as a puppet of Milosevic propaganda - how can a sports reporter, for instance, incite ethnic hatred?

The media is an invaluable civil institution that allows audiences not involved in the news follow events and make decisions. It must be protected. If Milosevic or NATO do not like the way they are being presented by the media, or are embarrassed by their actions, a better way to respond would be with arguments that counter such "negative" reporting. or a cessation to the activities in question. Attempting to silence the media by force must not be allowed to happen.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's Kheirallah Kheirallah said Palestinians are right to be worried as Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov accepted his Israeli counterpart Ariel Sharon's invitation to visit the West Bank. It seems that the tour was an attempt by Sharon to convince Ivanov of his security policy, which aims at keeping the largest part of the area occupied, added Kheirallah. Israel and Russia are "flirting" with each other, argued the writer, and this was obvious when Russian Prime Minister Yevgeni Primakov "joked" with his Israeli counterpart Benyamin Netanyahu that if he was an Israeli, he would have voted for Netanyahu: Primakov wanted to convey the message to Netanyahu that joint relations have improved. At the same time, despite Israeli complaints that Russia provides Iran with missile technology, this did not prevent Netanyahu from pushing the U.S. to facilitate loans from international donors to Russia, according to Kheirallah. Do Israel's relations with Russia aim at counterbalancing the role of the U.S. in the region, asked Kheirallah. There is a political gap between Washington and Tel Aviv, because of the reluctance of the latter to implement the Wye accords. In other words, the 51-year-old Jewish state wants to say that it has become "mature" enough, and that it does not need the U.S., which has protected the country and assisted Israel to impose itself over neighbouring countries and to occupy their land, argued the writer. In fact, Israel is not "mature" enough because Russia knows its limits when it comes to the U.S. and the current "flirting" between Israel and Russia is nothing but political manoeuvring that will stop after the Israeli elections. said Kheirallah. After May 17, the two parties will remember their actual powers, knowing that the U.S. will not give up its role and Israel will always remain under Washington's custody, which now has a place for Palestinians and Yasser Arafat, Kheirallah concluded.

Washington Watch

The Khalil Gibran Awards and the Arab Americans

WHEN THE Arab American Northern Ireland. Institute Foundation (AAIF) presented the first Khalil Gibran Spirit of Humanity Awards last week they helped shine a light on the extraordinary contributions the community is making in American life.

The awards are to be given annually to individuals and institutions that promote tolerance and coexistence. According to the AAIF the awards "aim to promote diversity and cultural interaction and to showcase programmes that foster democratic and humanitarian values across racial, ethnic and religious lines".

The award is named after Khalil Gibran, an Arab American author known throughout the United States as a poet and humanist who was proud of his Arab heritage and who promoted tolerance, valued human endeavours that bettered social relations and individual self worth.

In giving these awards, Arab Americans were not only recognising those who merit acknowledgement they were making a statement about the maturity of the community that is now in a position to give such awards.

Arab Americans also sent a message about the kind of America and world that they want to be a part of shaping for the future.

This year's recipients were an impressive group. Topping the list was former Senator George Mitchell who was recognised for the leadership he displayed in an effort to resolve the conflict over

Mitchell, who is part Irish and part Lebanese, has often acknowledged, with pride, both ancestries. He was a Senator for 14 years and served as Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate for six years.

 Receiving the award for corporate commitment is the Ford Motor

Ford has an outstanding record of support for the arts, education programs and civic activities geared toward youth assistance, and programs that cross cultural barriers. Its support has extended to Arab American institutions in greater Detroit, including annual grants for the Arab Festival, a youth library, and the Arab Community Centre for Economic and Social Services (ACCESS) in Dearborn.

Accepting the award for Ford was Jac Nasser, its President Nasser is of Arabic descent.

Other Gibran awardees included, Federico Mayor, the Director General of UNESCO, who received the award for International Accomplishment: the National Centre for Neighbourhood Enterprise, a grassroots movement devoted to solving the social and economic problems of povertystricken neighbourhoods; and the YWCA, a national organisation which has a consistent and courageous record of challenging injus-

tice and racial discrimination. As impressive as the recipients of the awards might be, those who presented the awards on behalf of the

AAIF, also have distinguished records of accomplishment. the Representing Administration and presenting the award to George Mitchell was the Honourable Donna Shalala, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Shalala is the highest ranking Arab American in the President's Cabinet. Two other presenters were outstanding leaders in industry: Richard Abdoo, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Wisconsin Energy Corporation and Yousif Ghafari, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ghafri and Associates, one of the nation's leading architectural design firms.

Also among the presenters were two of the nation's most respected media personalities: Diane Rehm. host of a popular nationally syndicated National Public Radio (NPR) show and Helen Thomas, the Dean of the White House Press Corps. Also on hand for the evening's

ceremonies were: the Honourable Edward Gabriel, U.S. Ambassador to Morocco, Senator Spencer (R-MI), Abraham Congressmen Nick Jo Rahall, II (D-WV), Ray LaHood (R-IL) and John Sununu (R-NH) — all Arab

I write about this event because it is important that the Arab world understand the progress made by Arab Americans in all areas of U.S. life. I recently returned from a visit to the Middle East, where I was struck by how little some of my Arab friends knew about Arab Americans.

I had brought with me a brochure distributed by the AAIF entitled "Arab Americans: Making a Difference." The brochure describes over 100 prominent Arab Americans-well-known celebrities, who made a mark in government, the media, sports, entertainment, industry, medicine and even fashion

design. The list is an impressive one, as impressive as could be compiled by any American ethnic community. And yet Arab Americans are not known in the Arab world for their accomplishments.

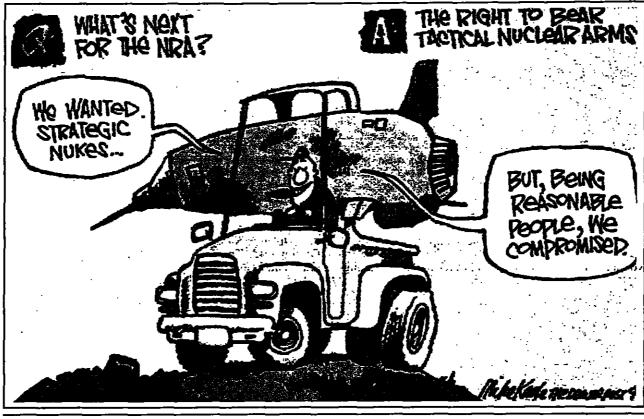
In part this is our own fault. For too many years, Arab Americans have defined ourselves by our problems. With justification, we have complained about discrimination and negative stereotyping. These are real problems and we have been right to attack them. But, all too often, we have created the impression that all that could be said about Arab Americans is we are a discriminated against minority. To limit our self-definition to the problems we face is to create a grossly inaccurate portrait. In fact Arab Americans are an American success

In giving the Khalil Gibran Awards, then, Arab Americans accomplish still another purpose. They help define Arab Americans by their accomplishments, by their values and by their vision of the future. We are, as I said in my closing comments to the evening's festivities, a community that can be defined by "our strong families, our entrepreneurial success, our educational achievements, our faith and our respect for diversity." We have problems, to be sure, but we have created institutions and organisations, and we have the will to help us solve those problems.

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In one of his early writings. Gibran penned what he called "An Open Letter to Syrian American Youth." Appearing in the first issue of the Syrian World in 1926, the letter urges Syrian Americans to make "contributions to this new civilisation." Defining what it means to be a good citizen, Gibran writes: It is to stand before the towers of New York, Washington, Chicago and San Francisco saying in your heart, "I am descendant of a people that built Damascus, and Biblus, and Tyre and Sidon, and Antioch, and now I am here to build with you. and with a will." It is to be proud of being an American, but it is also to be proud that your fathers and mothers came from a land upon which God laid his gracious hand and raised His messengers.

To look at the recipients and presenters of this year's Khalil Gibran Awards and to look at the accomplishments of the millions of Arab Americans who have made real contributions to every aspect of U.S. life, it is clear that, despite difficulties Arab Americans have taken Gibran's advice seriously.



Just your average country

By Gwynne Dyer

THE UNITED States is neither a miracle nor a monster; it is just another country. As the world tries to make sense of the latest mass killing in an American school, this is a notion with little appeal for either Americans or for-

eigners. It is, however, true. Most Americans, trained from infancy to regard their country as unique, tend to lurch directly from thinking that things in the United States are uniquely wonderful (when they go right) to believing that they are uniquely dreadful (when they go wrong).

Thus the Vietnam war, for those who opposed it, was not just a stupid blunder by the bumbling officials of an apprentice superpower, it was the most evil war ever waged on this planet. And the Colorado school massacre, coming on top of half a dozen similar incidents in the past two years. is not just the result of stupid laws and bad behaviour, it is a metaphor for the decay of the American soul.

Many non-Americans take the same extreme positions. Some do so because they have a tangled emotional relationship with the fantasy America of the mass media, which they half-hope, half-fear represents their future too. Others agree simply because they hate America: you can imagine what Serbian propaganda is doing with the school killings in Littleton.

. So let us pull a long way back and consider more generally the horrors that happen in societies that are mostly made up of decent people. Between September and December of last year, for example, 87 cases of women being homibly burnt by 'stove-bursts' were recorded by two major hospitals in the neighbouring Pakistani cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Almost all of these cases, according to Shahnaz Bokhari of the Progressive Women's Association, were actually deliberate wife-burnings.

Pakistanis, though poorer than Americans, have just as high an opinion of themselves and their culture, and would be just as outraged by this comparison as the average American, but stay with it for a moment. Consider what actually happens in all these

The woman's husband, frequently aided by his mother or other relatives, seizes his wife, pours oil over her, and then sets it alight. The motive is usually financial: she has not paid enough dowry, or her husband

has simply got a better offer. And whether the police and the courts are not so thorshe dies, as her attackers intend, or survives to live out a lonely life of ghastly mutilation and perpetual pain, she will almost never blow their cover story: that the stove exploded and burnt her.

Why not? Because, explains Shahnaz Bokhari, a clinical psychologist who founded the PWA ten years ago, "the social system gives nothing to women. They leave them dumb from the day they are born." And even if the survivors knew how to complain, the police and the courts are unlikely to listen so long as the family who committed the crime stick to their story.

Wife-burning is a plague in Pakistan; the PWA alone has logged 1,600 cases in the past ten years. Nor can it be written off as something that only the desperately poor and ignorant do to their women: this is also a middle-class crime that flourishes amidst the grand houses and leafy gardens of Islamabad, Pakistan's purpose-built capital.

Yet everybody would agree that Pakistan, like the United States, is mainly inhabited by good and moral people. How can this sort of

thing happen? The roots of the problem clearly lie in a culture that holds women to be inferior. Most Pakistani men, while implicitly accepting this belief, both subjugate and 'protect' the women in their families, for they are not monsters. But for the tiny proportion of men who ARE capable of monstrous acts -- and who may number in the hundreds of thousands in such a big population — the laws and customs of Pakistan are a morderers'

Wife-burning has nothing to do with Islam, though Pakistan is overwhelmingly Muslim. It is equally prevalent in neighbouring India, which is predominantly Hindu. This is about local customs, values and laws, and their unintended consequences in societies which. inevitably, include some individuals who are weak in both empathy and self-control.

Now bring it all back to the United States, where practically nobody burns their wives - even though there are greedy and ruthless Americans who are similarly capable of monstrous acts. Why not?

One reason is that women are now regarded in the West as independent individuals. They don't have downes any more, which makes it less profitable for even the nastiest husband to burn his wife. Another reason is that he probably wouldn't get away with it: oughly conditioned to overlook violence against women, and his victim, if she survived, would be unlikely to shield her attack-

American society does a better job of protecting women - but it does a much worse job of thwarting people like Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris. U.S. police and courts take a much more relaxed view than those in Pakistan of houses stuffed full of guns. Americans believe that freedom of speech is so important that even web sites peddling racist hate propaganda and telling you how to make terrorist bombs must be protected (which Pakistanis would regard as stark raving lunacy).

Pertiaps the almost oppressive closeness of the average Pakistani family, compared to the loss of contact across the generations that occurs in so many American families, is also relevant here. The sum of the differences, at any rate, has a clear result. Heavily armed teenagers (and even sub-teenagers) massacring their school-mates has become a feature of contemporary American life. It does not happen in Pakistan.

In neither case do the vast majority approve of the dreadful crimes committed by only a few people. But in both cases there is a causal connection between the values and laws of the larger society and the specific deeds that everybody deplores.

Now, if you were really serious about ending wife-burning in Pakistan, you wouldn't wait generations for the whole society's attitude to women to change. You would immediately pass and enforce laws that required all cases where women were burnt, scalded, or splashed with acid in their own homes to be investigated by special prosecutors. And over the longer run you would try to suppress the custom of giving downes that provides the motive for most of these crimes.

Similarly, if you were really serious about ending school massacres in America, you would not begin by trying to reform the family. You would immediately pass laws that make it very hard for private individuals to own guns at all. And over the longer run you would work on ways of redefining free speech so that you can ban the kinds of films, video games and web sites that desensitise impressionable children to the point where horrific deeds like last Wednesday's mas-

sacre in Littleton can seem like fun. If you were really serious about it.

A paradox

AS WE approach the twenty first century and are about bidding the current twentieth century farewell, a paradoxical question, in my opinion, remains yet unsolved: Why has not the astonishing development in science and technology in this century been accompanied, so to speak, with a paralleled development particularly in terms of human rights? What is crystal clear now, in my attempt to find an answer to this dilemma, is that the greater advances we make in science and technology the worse we achieve in the field of human rights. Unfortunately the current century teems with flagrant examples of endless human suffering, mass killings, renewed cycles of violence, tragedies, genocide, racial cleansing and many other forms of torture and punishment, to the extent that very little can be written in the file of human rights. What to tell future generations, what our legacy to them will be, are also crucial questions we should be prepared to answer.

The case against overhead power lines

LAST SUMMER Majali's government started a project to remove overhead power lines and place them in underground conduits. Apparently, with the end of his government the project also ended.

There are many reasons why our city should start placing these lines underground. Practically, underground conduits afford the common driver extra safety as, with no poles, there is less chance of collisions, which also affect the inhabitants, because power has to be cut off in order to place the pole back in the ground.

Technically, corona discharges (when the voltage gradient, or electric field strength, at the surface of the conductor exceeds the breakdown gradient of the air, the air near the conductor surface becomes ionised. This condition is evidenced by a visible glow at night and by a buzzing noise). From high-tension, power lines may be sources of interference. Electromagnetic impulses (EMP) resulting from a nuclear explosion (in our case, from possible nuclear testing by Israel) and Iraq is credited with turning off street lights, and coupling to cables unless adequate shielding and penetration control is incorporated into overhead lines. High currents and voltages in a power line may induce currents in a telephone line thus producing noise.

Environmentally, vibration of towers caused by the wind bends the conductors where they are clamped to the insulators and eventually may produce fatigue breakage. Audible noise levels, especially in rain or humid conditions, are high and require wide buffer zones between transmission lines.

Current environmental challenges have been brought on the basis of negative biological effects of the electrostatic field produced by EHV lines. The IEEE Spectrum reported in 1995 the harmful effects of electric fields with respect to cancer, but these effects were also reported with ordinary receptacles (it is prudent not to place the top of one's bed next to a power outlet).

Currently in the U.S., legislation in more than a dozen states requires that all new services to developments of 5 or more residences be put underground. About 1 per cent of total, transmission mileage of the U.S. is underground, located mostly in congested urban areas. The cost of constructing an underground line ranges from 8 times (at 69 KV) to 20 times (at 500 KV) that of an overhead line of the same length and power capability. Therefore it is used only where necessary.

A 1986 discovery of a superconducting, mixed oxide material allows superconducting, power delivery technologies to come within the realm of practicality. The first, large-scale, utility application of superconductivity will probably be to underground, transmission cables with extremely, low losses; the current-carrying capacity of the new materials will have to be increased to carry the high currents required for large, power transfers. In certain areas, use of underground transmission lines made up of the new type of superconductors might cost far less than the use of today's, common, underground cables.

Yasar Atiyeh

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Mazen Allac

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American Oracles, empires and early Islamic intrigues: Eight centuries of ancient history at Humayma in south Jordan

(This is the second of three articles on the excavations and surveys at Humayma, in south Jordan.)

THE HUMAYMA area's political status changed in the early 2nd century AD, after the Roman Emperor Trajan moved south and formally annexed Petra and the Nabataean realm into the Roman Empire, around 106-111 AD. The Via Nova Traiana (Trajan's New Road) was built then between Bostra and Agaba; the town of Auara — as Humayma was called then - became an important station along that vital military and commercial route. All the Roman-Byzantine sites in the region identified by the project's regional survey were associated with the relatively flat areas around the Via Nova Traiana, while the earlier Nabataean forts and watchtowers were located throughout a much wider area of hills, valleys and plains that went beyond the level ground.

The Roman road itself was a masterful engineering feat, measuring from 3.5 to 6 metres wide and crossing some very rugged terrain on bridges and viaducts. Travellers and troops could move quickly on the all-weather, paved road, but usually under the watchful eyes of Roman troops and officials based in watchtowers, forts, fortlets, and mansions alongside the

The study of Humayma is being done by a Canadian-led multinational team headed by Dr. John Oleson, professor at the Department of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Victoria (Victoria, British Columbia, Canada). Co-directors of the work are Dr. Kheiriveh 'Amr of the

Jordanian Department of

Antiquities, Dr. Robert

Schick (Albright Insti-

tute, Jerusalem), and

Rebecca Foote of Har-

The work is conducted

in cooperation with the

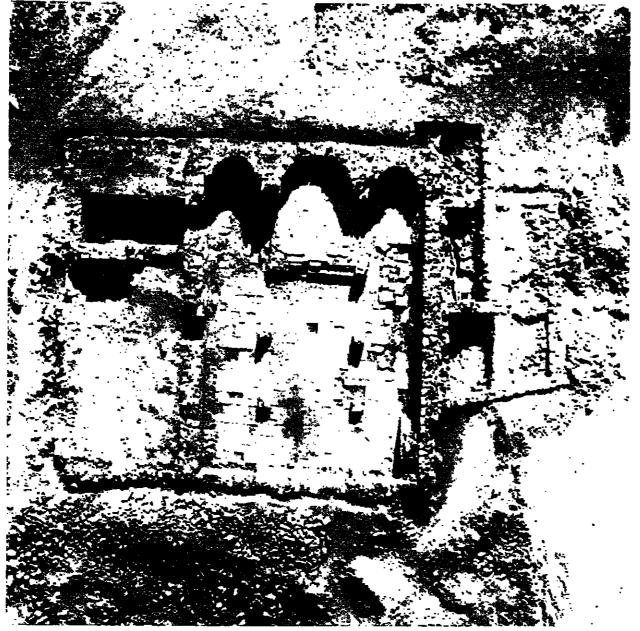
Jordanian Department of

Antiquities, with logisti-

cal support provided by

vard University.

Oriental



The lower church, one of several Byzantine churches at Humayma (photo by W. and E. Myers)

the most prominent architectural features at the site today. It measured 206 x 148 metres, and controlled the area between sister Roman forts at Agaba to the south and Udruh (15 kilometres south-east of Petra) to the north. The distances between the Roman era stations in this area on the ancient

tions confirmed the plan Principalis and north/south Via Praetoria. of the Principia — the A colonnaded courtyard, headquarters building perhaps for parades, was as well as the fort's located at the junction of founding date in the early 2nd century. A silver-drachma coin minted for the two roads, and nearby was a shrine or an area the Emperor Trajan in Bostra between 112 and for religious ritual — typical arrangements for Roman forts, Oleson 117 AD was found alongexplained. A sandstone side early 2nd century pottery from throughout altar and a statue base with Greek inscriptions the fort's foundation levels. This "suggests that the fort may have been built during Trajan's reign, immediately after

> Oleson said. Brightly coloured frescoes adorned the interior of the building, in some places possibly including gold leaf details. One room with particularly fine floor paving and colourful frescos is likely to have been the Aedes the shrine for the military unit's standards, or flags, and a quasi sacred part of the fort.

the annexation of the

kingdom,"

Nabataean

The excavated barracks area revealed the typical arrangement of a long rectangular block of small rooms set back-toback alongside the Via Praetoria. This area also revealed the remains of a forge for reworking iron and bronze items, including pieces of weapons and armour. Slag from smelting operations was recovered from an industrial area near the barracks, in the northern half of the fort.

A long but badly weathered Latin inscription was found inside the Principia, a symbol of the

'western" Roman culture of the troops stationed there. The remains of many Nabataean bowls within the fort indicated that the Romans bought some of their needs from the local Nabataeans. Oleson said. The Roman era bathhouse located outside the fort also shows interaction between the two populations who were culturally and ethnically very different from one another. It is also possible that Nabataeans served in the Roman army, according

to Oleson and his co-

directors.

The excavators initially thought that the town had three separate Roman era military installations: along with the fort, there is a castellum at the townsite itself, measuring 50 x 60 metres, located several hundred metres south of the main fort; and an 11x15-metre watchtower located on the eastern edge of the town, between the town and the Roman highway two kilometres away. The 1998 season showed that the watchtower, in fact, dated from the Byzantine period. (It was used again in the early Islamic and possibly the Ottoman eras, and in its later life served more as a farm-

house.) Excavations in 1998 clarified many aspects of life at Roman era Hawar in the centuries immediately after the arrival of the Roman garrison. The excavations uncovered nine rooms of a house

with fresco decorations depicting typical Graeco-Roman motifs, such as the Muses and other mythological figures, and a pedestaled birdbath. The other rooms in this house, during this phase. were either undecorated or had simple red bands and dots. During the subsequent renovations in the later phases of the house's use, walls were whitewashed, repaired, and sometimes resurfaced with large potshards attached to the mudbrick with mudplaster. These inferior renovations may perhaps reflect military damage to the building, to judge by the meaning of seven possible ballista balls found in a fresco dump pre-dating

on stone foundations,

with stone arches and

roofing slabs. At least

seven different phases of

occupation were identi-

fied, starting with the ini-

tial phase in the late 2nd

to early 3rd century AD.

From that period the

interior walls of a room

excavators

unearthed

Another cataclysmic event in the late 3rd cen-

the renovations. Project

assistant director Barbara

Reeves suggests that this

military damage occurred

at the time of the revolt of

Palmyra's Queen Zeno-

built of mudbrick walls stone channel, replacing the stone channel with a pressurised system laid directly inside channel. massive bronze stopcock regu-

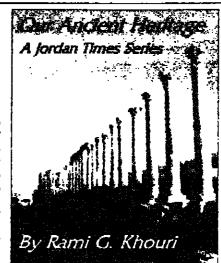
lated the flow of water into the lead pipe; the stopcock was found intact in a small niche outside the reservoir. The pipes were probably designed to feed the Roman baths located about 100 metres to the south. The lead pipes were later removed, the valve blocked with mortar, and the reservoir completely bypassed by a terra-cotta pipeline, which probably also sup-

plied the baths with

water.

The first phase of the Roman era settlement lasted about a century and a half, and petered out by the late 3rd century AD. Perhaps as a result either of the attack by Zenobia or of the Diocletianic renovation of the Limes Arabicus (the Roman fortified frontier zone) around 300 AD, the fort was abandoned for several decades at least, and then reworked in the early 4th century AD," Oleson

The area north of



Humayma started feeling the pressure of raids from the east in the last two decades of the 3rd century, and thus the frontier defensive system required upgrading, which hap-pened under the Emperor Diocletian.

. The town was mentioned in several Roman and Byzantine period texts and maps, including Ptolemy's list of Arabian towns in the mid-2nd century, the Peutinger Man's list of road stations in the 4th century AD, and the late 4th/early 5th century AD Notitia Dignitatum. which mentions that a contingent of indigenous cavalry archers requires sagittarii indigenae) was

stationed at Auara. The fort was remodelled for non-military purposes in the early 4th century, "perhaps for simple domestic occupation by non-military families engaged in pastoral and agricultural occupations." Oleson said,



The water reservoir within the Roman castrum (fort), viewed from the south-west (photo by John Oleson)

tury caused the house's arches and walls to collapse, but after a brief abandonment the building was partly reused; a cooking area was identified in part of the oncefrescoed room. Another bout of collapsing walls soon after this final phase of use caused the building's inhabitants to abandon it for good.

Roman bathhouse

Like any respectable Roman settlement, Auara also had its public bath house, which was located some 300 metres northeast of the town. This small structure (just 10 x 15 metres) was built within a pre-existing Nabataean house, and experienced two main phases of its life in the Late Roman and Late Byzantine periods (it may have been used into the early Islamic decades as well). The first baths in the Late Roman period comprised five rooms: a reception and undressing room (apodyterium), a bathing room with a cold water basin above a heated floor (frigidarium), a sweating room with heated floor and walls (laconicum), and a hot bath room (calidarium) with a hot water basin amidst heated walls and floor. In the second stage of the baths in the Late Byzantine period, a second, larger apodyterium was added, and the internal heating systems were rebuilt.

The Romans reconfigured the overflow of water from a Nabataean reservoir into town via a





the fort, the east/west Via The excavated Roman baths at Humayma (photo by C. Mundigler)

Berchem (Geneva, Switzerland), the Taggart Foundation (New York, U.S.), and the Jordanian Department of Antiquities.

The first Roman troops probably moved to Humayma at the beginning of the 2nd century AD, perhaps to secure and patrol the new highway, according to Oleson. The troops were based in the Roman fort within the town, a substantial structure laid out in a (typical-

ly Roman) symmetrical

manner. The fort is one of

the American Centre of Aqaba. This three-hectare fort Research was a relatively large (ACOR) in Amman. The facility for its day; only principal funder for the the major legionary project has been the fortresses at Lejjun (east Social Sciences and of Karak) and Udruh Humanities Research were larger in size. The Council of Canada and fort was entered through the University of Victofour gates, each flanked ria, with additional fundby projecting rectangular ing from the Max van Foundation

A bronze water valve from the Roman period (photo by John Oleson)

Peutinger Table — from

Zadagatta to Auara to

Praesidium to Aila —

correspond exactly to the

distances from the sites

today known as Sadaqa

(south-east of Petra).

Khalide (alongside the

railway, north of Aqaba

and Wadi Rum), and

Humayma,

Khirbet

towers. Other projecting corner towers defined the four corners, and a total of at least 12 square, projecting intermediate towers were located along the four sides. A rampart walkway was identified inside the three-metrethick exterior walls. Inside the north-west corner of the fort the Roman built a large water reservoir measuring 29x14x3 metres, which is well pre-

served today. The four gates led into the two main streets of found here were dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus and an as yet unidentified "Savior God." Charcoal graffiti on the rough white plastered walls of the portico of the courtyard included a palm tree, a man riding a horse or camel, an ostrich, and

human caricatures. The 1996-1998 excava-

Israel expects economy to grow between 2-2.5% in '99

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's economy would grow by treasury on Sunday 2.1 per cent in 1999, only a affirmed that it expected the economy to grow by 2.0-2.5 per cent in 1999, compared with an increase of 2.0 per cent last year.

"The good news is that after a period of concerns that growth would be a lot lower in 1999, we are reiterating a forecast that speaks of a similar rate of growth as in 1998," the treasury said in a report.

"The bad news is that a similar rate of growth as in 1998 is still very low, and per capita growth will be nil." it said.

The Israeli economy has been in a slowdown since 1996. The government was looking forward to a moderate turnaround this year. But in October, following last August's emerging markets crisis, the treasury revised its 1999 projections downward to a 2.0-2.5 per cent range from 2.5 per

Earlier on sunday, Ilanot Batucha Investment House said it forecast the Israeli slight improvement over 1998. It said the forecast was due to the slowdown in the world economy, which would hit Israel's main trading partners, the United States and Europe.

Nessuah Zannex Securities, meanwhile, said Israel's economic slowdown would end in the second half of 1999.

Israel's gross domestic product (GDP) would grow only 2.6 per cent in 1999, but most of this expansion would occur in the second half of the year when GDP would rise at an annual rate of three per cent, Micha Goldberg, head of research at Nessuah Zannex, told a news conference on Sun-

day.
The main reasons for Nessuah Zannex's view included an expected turnaround in the depressed housing market, a recovery in tourism, increased immigration from Russia and a new government following the May 17 general elec-

The treasury said unemployment would reach 8.8 per cent this year. While this would be up slightly from 1998's average of 8.6 per cent, it was down from an earlier forecast of 9.0 per cent.

The ministry said growth in exports of goods and services would improve this year, rising by 7.3 per cent compared with 6.0 per cent in 1998, because of a pickup in exports of polished diamonds. Imports, not counting defence equipment, was forecast to increase 4.4 per cent from

1.7 per cent in 1998. The forecast for the current account deficit as a percentage of gross domestic product was unchanged at 2.3 per cent.

The treasury said capital spending would continue to decline, but at a much slower pace. It said gross investment would contract by 1.7 per cent in 1999, versus 7.6 per cent decline last year and 6.1 per cent decline in

IMF sees soft landing in U.S., warns of risks

will moderate as the eight-year old expansion reaches its limits, but the risks of a more abrupt slow down are still substantial, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said.

"The U.S. economy will need to slow down at some point over the next year or two," chief economist Michael Mussa told a news conference.

The IMF forecast U.S. economic growth to slow to 3.3 per cent this year and 2.2 per cent in 2000 from 3.9 per cent last year. The 1999 projection is 1.5 percentage points higher than the fund's previous forecast,

made in December. Mussa said the economic cooling would probably be mild and occur gradually, but one risk was a possible large fall in the stock market that could severely dent

economic growth. We have a very highly valued stock market, said Mussa, adding that it could take a correction

WASHINGTON (R) — in the market of 20 per U.S. economic growth cent or more to bring prices down closer to their historical relationship with earnings.

The stock market's gains have helped to propel a powerful expansion in the economy by boosting the wealth of American consumers, enabling them to spend more. But if stocks were to fall, the market could affect growth negatively.

Mussa said one catalyst for a drop in equities prices might be a rise in interest rates by the Federal Reserve (Fed), even though he emphasised it was not a foregone conclusion that rates needed to move higher.

"If the Fed needed to tighten a fair bit to slow the economy down, then the stock market would be significantly vulnerable to such action," said Mussa.

threat alone should not deter policymakers. "You can't worry about deter not cracking any eggs."

But he insisted that

The fund said temporary factors containing U.S. inflation, such as

ic overheating. the effects of global commodity weaker

prices and the stronger dollar, may disappear, raising the odds that higher rates could be But the IMF urged the is headed.

Fed, which it credited for having brought about "medium-term price stability," to keep an open mind. Should growth slow more than expected, it may have to cut rates further to "help ensure a soft landing," it

The Fed cut rates three times last year to protect the U.S. economy from

needed.

financial turmoil, but most economists expect it to be on hold for the next few months as it waits for clearer signs on which way the economy

The fund also urged U.S. politicians not to get carried away by expectations of a large budget surplus. The fund noted that a large tax cut — an idea proposed by some Republicans in the U.S. Congress -- could

add fuel to the consumer spending boom and thus

raise the risk of econom-

As the economy has grown at a brisk rate of nearly four per cent over the past two years, economists and policymakers have consistently predicted an imminent slowdown - only to be forced later to ratchet their forecasts higher.

"I think we, like every forecaster, have forecast for the last three years growth that was slower than has actually turned out to be the case. We intend to continue doing it until the economy gets it right," Mussa quipped.

Strength of Japanese yen seen waning

TOKYO (AFP) Despite attempts by Japanese authorities to increase the international use of the yen, the currency's status is waning as Tokyo's financial giants pull out of world markets, a former central banker

has said. "Actually the yen's status is declining," said Akira Nagashima, once deputy governor of the Bank of Japan and now an executive advisor for Tokio Marine and Fire Insur-

ance Co. "Japanese financial institutions have been deprived of their strengths and are pulling back from international business," he told a Tokyo

seminar. "It is difficult to increase use of yen credits. Japanese institutions will have to recover their strengths before the use of the yen can increase

again," he said. But at the same time the new European currency was gaining widespread use, he

added. "The value of the

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2 Fairy-taic

3 Passoori

4 Night before

5 Dubs anew

6 Russian

7 Poruso

36 Taken by

Minor

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40 Allotted poston

surprise

61 Solidifies

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55 Bakers

use in capital markets has been greater than the U.S. dollar," the U.S. dollar," Nagashima indicated. In January the euro had a 45 per cent share of bond market, against 44 per cent for the dollar, he pointed

Earlier this month. European Union (EU) monetary affairs commissioner Thibault de Silguy said between January and March total euro bond issues stood at 140 billion euros, surpassing dollar issues.

Nagashima noted an "excessive dependency on the dollar peg" played a major role in the Asian financial crisis and said a greater use of Japan's currency could held calm economies ip

region. An increasing role of the yen as an international currency in Asia will foster stability in the Asian economies and in Japan as well," he said.

apan as wen,
Unfortunately, he
Japanese added, authorities used to have a passive attitude, yen strengthening pre-

euro is declining but its accepting a larger role for the yen as long as it was part of a natural

trend. Now the effect of reforms and new deregulation to encourage use of the yen would not be immediately apparent. "It will take time before those measures have a visible impact," he said.

Senior currency traders said recently that amid the dollar's slide against the yen, Japanese authorities are ready to intervene in markets to prevent a stronger yen from hurting the ailing Japanese economy, .

"Monetary authorities are vigilant in preventing the deflationary risks of a stronger yen on the economy and are prepared to intervene, possibly near 116 to 117 yen and definitely near 115 yen," said Ichiro Ikeda, director and head of sales of global foreign exchange at Credit Suisse First Boston.

Top financial diplomat Eisuke Sakakibara said the finance ministry wants to stop the

Peanuts

maturely.

"What is different from Sakakibara's pre-vious remarks is that he is very wary of the next three to four months rather than current economic conditions," said Kazuo Takayama, chief manager of foreign exchange sales. at HSBC Midland.

"The opportunity to back up his words with action may come when the dollar falls into the 117 yen range," he added.

In its latest monthly economic report, the Bank of Japan (BOJ) said the economy had stopped worsening but that it was hard to see a quick, self-sustaining recovery in private demand.

"Due to concerns for the economic outlook, the level at which the BOJ will intervene has likely been hiked up by several yen," a senior dealer at another European bank said.

A chief fund manager at a major Japanese life insurer said he was "100 per cent sure" the BOJ would step into currency markets at

115 yen. Ikeda said: "They are desperate to stabilise the dollar around 120 yen until signs of a

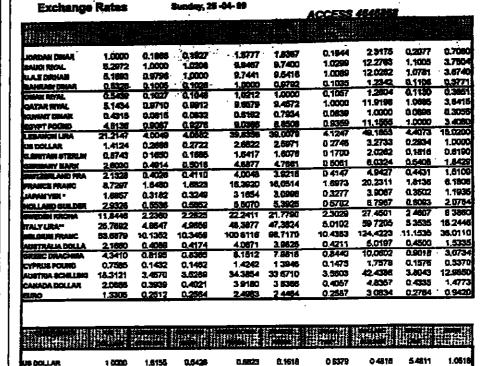
recovery materialise." Chances of interven-ion will likely tion increase if Tokyo stock prices begin to droop because of the stronger yen, traders said.

"Japanese monetary authorities tolerated a stronger yen only as long as stock prices remained firm," a dealer at a U.S. bank said.

benchmark The nikkei 225 stock average topped 17,000 on April 9 after ending the last fiscal year on March 31 at 15,708. Sakakibara, the vice

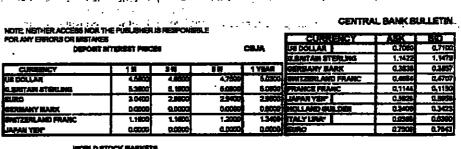
finance minister for international affairs. warned about strengthening yen after the dollar slipped 117 below overnight on March 22. "An excessive rise of

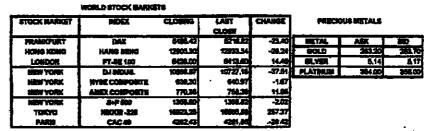
the yen at this point is undesirable and (the ministry) will take decisive action in response to any excessive rise of the yen," Sakakibara Reuters.

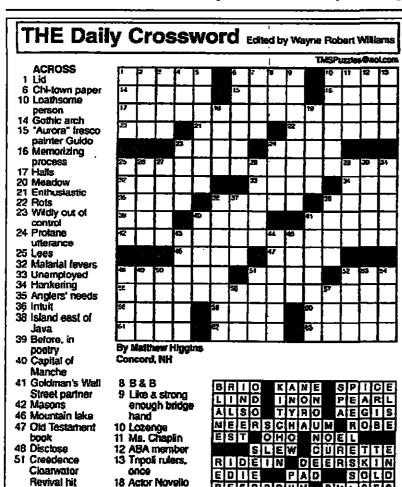


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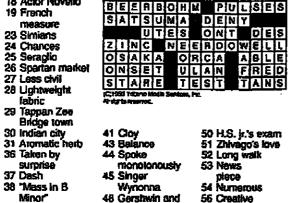
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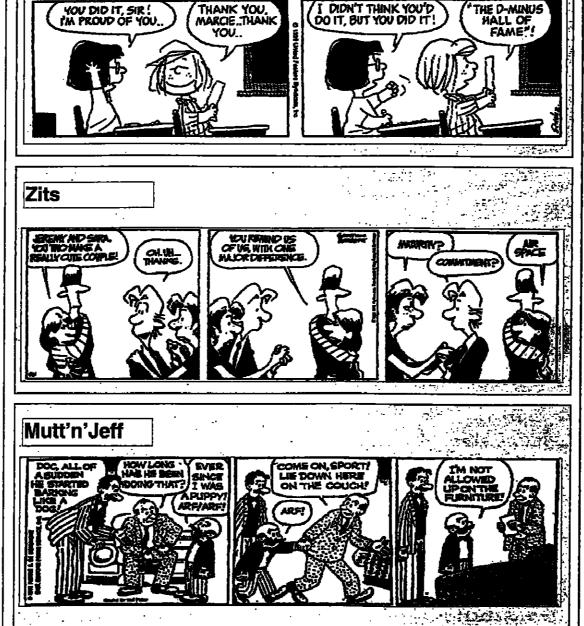




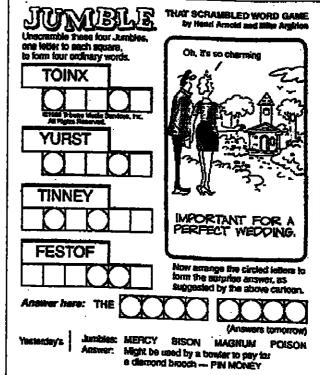




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ETTER HALF, enes ne jas

A review of news from the Arabic Press

Jordan Tanning Company complains of dumping large quantities of imported shoes on the local market

** LOWER SALES by about JD0.4 million last year have resulted in a slight decline in the net profit of the Jordan Tanning Company which said that it is still facing competition from imported industrial leather. "Dumping large quantities of new and old shoes on the local market is negatively affecting the local tanning industry," Board Chairman Talal Ghazawi told the ordinary meeting of the general assembly.

The company's sales amounted to JD8.6 million last year compared to JD8.9 million in 1997. The 4.5 per cent drop was due to a decline in local sales and exports both of which totalled JD5.7 million and JD2.8 million respectively. In 1997 local sales and exports

amounted to JD6.0 million and JD3.0 million. Consequently net profit dropped by JD150,000 from JD757,000 recorded in 1997 to JD606,000 at the end of 1998.

According to the annual report, the company's tanning section generated a JD230,859 net profit and the shoes section accounted for the remaining JD375,959. The report showed the total balance sheet at JD5.8 million with the equity of the shareholders standing at around JD4.7 million.

The shareholders concluded their meeting by approving the distribution of dividends at a rate of 30 per cent as recommended by the board of directors (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq + Al Arab Al

Yawm + Al Dustour). Arab International for Education and Investment Company distributes JD2.4 million in dividends

** AS A result of a seven per cent rise in earnings, or JD1.2 million, and a 14 per cent increase in operational costs, or JD1.3 million, the Arab International for Education and Investment Company posted a JD4.4 million net pretax profit at the end of last year. The company which owns the Applied Science University, said in its annual report that the earnings from the university amounted to JD17.4 million and that operational costs and other expenses totalled JD12.9 million. After accounting for income tax the company posted a JD3.0 million net after tax profit

The annual report showed that the company's total assets amounted to JD37.0 million compared to JD36.0 million at the end of 1997. Board Chairman Abdullah Abu Khadijeh told the general assembly which was meeting in an ordinary session that fixed assets were higher at the end of 1998 because of new buildings, furniture and equipment that were added to the facilities of the university.

Abu Khadijeh told the shareholders that the

company's indebtedness to banks dropped by 29 per cent or JD1.24 million last year and that shareholders' equity increased by two per cent from JD22.3 million at the end of 1997 to JD22.7 million. He referred to the raise in capital to JD20.25 million in 1997 to highlight the expansion that the university implemented in

He noted in this regard that the investments of the company also increased last year to JD7.5 million from JD4.6 million at the end of 1997 despite the liquidation of some affiliated entities. The increase, however, was highlighted in the annual report to be in Ibn Al Haitham Hospital in which the company raised its equity from 48 per cent when it was established to 53 per cent at

The general assembly concluded the meeting by approving the distribution of JD2.4 million in dividends to be distributed among shareholders at a rate of 12 per cent (Al Arab Al Yawm + Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq + Al Dustour).

BRASILIA (R) — Brazil is

scaling down its diplomatic

activities as part of a sweep-

ing cost-cutting plan

designed to restore foreign

investor confidence in Latin

America's biggest economy.

Brazil will shut its

embassies in Cameroon,

Kuwait and Tunisia and

close consulates in the

United States, Switzerland,

Germany, France, Puerto

Rico, Canada and China, the

foreign ministry said in a

"The deactivation of the

embassies is temporary and

will not affect the intensity

of Brazil's relations with the

three countries," it said. "As

soon as the current outlook

of economic and financial

restrictions is overcome, the

intends to reactivate them."

government

RADISSON SAS ANNOUNCES

HOLIDAY WINNER: AMMAN

RADISSON SAS Hotel Amman has announced that Ahmed

Odeh of Jordan Telecom was the lucky winner of the Key Card

Treasure Hunt. This was held from the 20th March - 20th April in

cooperation with Lufthansa Airlines and the Radisson SAS Hotel

Berlin, giving Odeh and his wife a free holiday for 6 days in

Berlin, Germany. The Radisson SAS Hotel Amman would like to

thank the sponsors and the 470 people that took part by viewing

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statement.

Brazil shuts HOROSCOPE embassies FORECAST FOR MONDAY, APRIL 26, 1999

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Give work your full attention today. Perfection is required. Even the tiniest mistake will be noticed and pointed out. Looks like there's a quality control inspector following you around, but its really a good thing. If you don't have someone like that checking up on you, do it yourself. That'll

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Looks like you're lucky today with money, and possibly also with love. The money could come from an a windfall, possibly something you applied for long ago and won. As for love, it looks like a friend is under stress. Offer a shoulder to cry on, and viola, you'll emerge as the hero in the situation without much effort at all.

GEMINE (May 21 to June 21) Looks like there's some sort of mess that has to be cleaned up at home. If you can't quite figure out how to do it, get a friend to help. You be the brains behind the operation and let somebody else provide the strong back. Hev. mi well get a couple of those, and get a few other chores done while you're at it.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) You're smart today, and persistent. It should be relatively easy to concentrate your attention and remember what you're learning. You need to plan your day. Don't waste it by memorising plots to old movies, unless, of course, you plan to write a screenplay. At any rate, you can see there's a little bit of responsibility involved. Now that you know you have talent, use

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) If you had tonnes of money, what would you spend it on? Toys? Games? Ways to have more fun? That's probably what you'd like to do with it today, but it doesn't look like there's enough. Well, there might be, if you put your money along with somebody else's. You'll need more than just a partner to help you with this job. You'll need a whole team.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You're good at picking up details today, and subtle innuendoes. Nothing will get by you for long, but don't use this razor sharp wit just to comment on the foibles of y our co-workers. Use it for something more practical. Study up on how to invest your money so you can become fabulously wealthy, for example.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Somebody's nagging you to do things better than you've ever done them before, and you're probably resisting. What you've done before has been magnificent. Everybody else loves it. How come one person keeps pestering you to improve? That person might even be your own conscience. Polish your act to perfection and become the star you've always wanted to be.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Looks like your friends are busy, making more work for you. That's kind of nice, in a way. its good to do business with your friends, if you're in business, that is. If you're just doing favours for them, you might want to reconsider. Would it be better for them to learn how to do some of these things on their own? Maybe you should be teaching, instead of try-

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't let your friends talk you into playing hooky today. There are things that have to be handled and you're the only one who can do the job right. You're the only one who knows exactly whom to call, and when. Follow up all your good leads. Once that's all out of the way, the rest of the day looks good for meetings and social get-togeth-

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are the key to everybody else's success today. You know what needs to be done and how to do it. Without you, they'll be floundering helplessly. You're the one with the experience, the know-how, the tact, the leadership qualities, so don't just sit back and watch them sink. Jump in there and show 'em how its supposed to be done.

AQUARTUS: (January 21 to February 19) This looks like a good day to go shopping for household items. You're going to be good with money right now. - practical, sensible, all those qualities you've always admired in others. While you're smant in many ways, shopping probably isn't one of them, because you assign it a low priority. But today, get interested in it. You might get a really

good deal. PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You're going to have to face a little opposition today, and maybe a little criticism, too. Just what you always wanted - someone to point out your character defects so you can correct them and achieve perfection. And you probably know who. The topic under discussion today: money, and how you handle it. Don't bother to argue with this person. Just take notes.

Birthstone of April: Diamond — Amethyst

Iran to shut mobiles of 18,000 officials

TEHRAN (R) - cash- any told the television the starved Iran is about to shut move would save the governoff the mobile phones of up to 18,000 state officials to save money, Iranian Television has reported.

It said the measure, stipulated in the country's state budget for the Iranian year which began on March 21, covered 95 per cent of mobile phones supplied to senior state offi-

An official of the State Telecommunications Comp-

Banks

lower

interest

rates on

RIYADH (AFP)

Saudi riyal

Saudi banks have low-

ered their interest rates

on the kingdom's cur-

rency following the end

of a wave of speculation

on the rival as oil price

remain firm, newspa-

The Saudi British

Bank has lowered its

rates on six-month

deposits by half a point

to six per cent and by a

quarter point to 6.25 per

cent for one year

Iqtissadiya newspaper

Other banks have low-

ered their rates to simi-

lar levels, the newspa-

An official from the

Saudi Hollandi Bank,

Ziyad Jawfi, told the

newspaper that "the rise in oil prices, which has

weakened demand for

the dollar, was a deter-

mining factor in the

lower interest rates on

Interest rates in Saudi

Arabia are set by banks

individually based on

supply and demand. Banks deposits with

the central bank do not

receive interest pay-

The rival has been hit

by two large waves of

speculation, the first in

the summer of last year

and a second in March

fuelled by fears that low

oil prices would place

undue pressure on the

the

Al

pers have said.

deposits,

per said.

the riyal.'

ments.

this year.

Speculation

Saudi economy.

ment up to 1.4 billion rivals (\$480,000) per month. The telephones would be sold to the public as required by the budget item, he said.

The Iranian government said last year it faced a deficit of six trillion rivals because of a slump in oil prices.

Iran, the world's third largest oil exporter, depends on petrodollars for S0 per cent of its hard currency earnings.

A.S.E TRADE

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Yamani, Lukman warn of high oil price danger

LONDON (R) — OPEC producers should not allow oil prices to rise too far or they will sow the seeds of another damaging oil mar-ket slump, OPEC Secretary General Rilwanu Lukman and former Saudi Oil Minister Zaki Yamani have agreed.

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The Organisation of the Petroleum Countries' (OPEC) new

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INDUSTRY

crude prices to \$18 a barrel by year's end but prices higher than that were no longer in the group's interest, said Lukman, a former Nigerian oil minister. "Anything above that

could be counter productive because it would encourage non-OPEC supplies, and while we expect OPEC Exporting members will stick to their agreement, let's say it might put some pressure on Sunday,25-04-99 their restraint." he told

Reuters in an interview. "Engaging in a series of massive output cuts as OPEC has done over the last year or so will eventually push oil prices back up to \$18 a barrel and perhaps send them beyond \$20 a barrel, but can they be expected to stay there?" asked Yamani.

"Might not this policy carry within it the seeds of its own destruction?" he told delegates at the Centre for Global Energy Studies conference.

Caution among OPEC members over how far oil prices might rise as a result of the stringent new output limits they agreed in March contrasts with group celebrations when oil rose above \$20 a barrel in 1996 and 1997.

That high price, com-bined with a slump in Asian oil demand, brought extra output onstream to cause a market slump which last year cost OPEC more than \$50 billion in lost revenues. Oil prices have risen swiftly since OPEC agreed lower exports, valuing benchmark U.K. brent

blend near \$16 from less than \$10 in late February. "Prices have already moved up more than 50 per cent and we expect them to continue moving in that general direction. By the end of the year maybe they will be between \$17 and

\$18," said Lukman. He said there were "sub-stantial indications" that OPEC members were sticking by their pact and reducing supply as required from the beginning of April.

"Although there may be a falls of the past two years. temptation to produce a little bit more at higher prices, we know from experience that is counter productive," he added. Yamani said that an

excessive price rise was guaranteed to restore confidence in high cost oil producing regions and sow the seeds of another downward cycle in boom-bust oil "The cuts do not consti-

tute a long term therapy for OPEC's problem of stabilising its members' oil income but merely an analgesic to relieve the short term pain," he said. "The danger if prices go

too high is that countries report concluded.

Want to Earn

output curbs may usher outside OPEC that were forced to shut in production may be encouraged to come back," admitted Lukman.

OPEC action in reining back supplies had sent other producers the message that the group would come to the rescue if prices dropped again, Yamani.

If oil producers outside OPEC are convinced OPEC cannot live with low oil prices ... then these producers will tend to undertake oil field developments on the assumption that oil prices will be supportive if not sooner than later," he concluded.

Meanwhile, the IMF has warned that commodity prices are expected to fall further this year, with oil prices dropping 8.3 per cent, and any pickup from 2000 is likely to be slow.

Oil prices are forecast to fall 8.3 per cent this year in dollar terms, after a 32.1 per cent plunge in 1998, while nonfuel commodity prices are seen dropping 4.0 per cent this year in dollar terms after falling 14.8 per cent last year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in a report.

"The overall weakness of commodity prices is expected to continue in 1999" because of slow demand, large supplies and rising inventories, the report said.

"Beyond 1999 commodity prices are forecast to recover, depending on the strength of the global business cycle upturn, but the recovery is expected to be slow," the IMF warned.

"A full rebound from current low levels should not _be_anticipated, even after the East Asian crisis and the recession in Japan have ended, owing to the secular increase in supplies," it

Oil prices are forecast to rise 13.4 per cent in dollar terms in 2000, with nonfuel commodity prices gaining 1.8 per cent, but this will be far from offsetting the price

Because of the likely slow turnaround, commodity exporters, particularly Middle East oil exporters, cannot continue to rely on using reserves and external borrowing to try to meet the shortfall, the report said.

Even if the recent pickup in oil prices were sustained, in would only "ease the pressures on oil producers to some limited extent."

"Countries that have so far relied on reserves and external borrowing to weather the effects on their external balances need to begin to reduce their domestic absorption," the

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Winners, and losers, celebrate **World Youth Championship**

LAGOS (AFP) — As Spain and Japan both celebrated Sunday after the end of the World Youth Championship, Nigerians said the tournament had shown fears about the staging the event here were exaggerated.

the National Stadium, Lagos, Saturday, the Spanish Under-20 team thrashed Japan 4-0 to win the three-week youth soccer championship, taking their first ever FIFA tournament win.

Spain had clearly outplayed most sides in the 24-nation tournament, losing no matches and drawing only once since April 3, and the win was warmly applauded by the partisan Nigerian crowd, packed into the 45,000seater stadium.

Speaking to reporters after the match, as a volley of fireworks lit up the sky for the closing cere-mony, an emotional Spanish coach Inaki Saez dedicated the victory to his late mother who died during the competition.

'I will always remember Nigeria because my mother died while I was here and I am dedicating this triumph to her," Saez said.

Captain Pablo Orbaiz said he thought the team had done themselves proud. "We have demonstrated that the Spanish know how to play football," he said.

Two-goal final hero Pablo Gonzalez said meanwhile the win was the "most emotional moment" of his life.

This is the most emotional moment of my life and I hope that there will be lots more like it. When the match was over, we the event was a qualified did not believe it." he told reporters.

For Japan, even to get a silver medal in the tour- to their quarter-finals nament was considered something of a victory. Frenchman Troussier form on the pitch.

Ghana and United States.

Ikedia and Spain's Pablo Gonzalez.

Croatia win FIFA

Fair Play award

LAGOS (AFP) — Croatia won the FIFA Fair Play award

Saturday as the World Youth Championship wound up

The Croatians, ousted in the second round by Brazil,

The best player award, voted by accredited journalists,

went to Mali's Seydou Keita, followed by Nigeria's Pius

were voted by FIFA officials for the award, followed by



Spanish team members hold the cup aloft after beating Lagos (AFP photo)

told reporters Japan could be proud of a team which had "triumped" in getting to the last two in a competition of 24 of the world's top footballing nations.

'We can only be happy with our second place. For a country like Japan, which is just getting started in footballing terms. just getting to the final is a victory," he said.

Mali, who placed third after beating Uruguay 1-0 on Saturday, were also pleased with the outcome. fifth-ranked

African side before the tournament, they only got into the final as Nigeria had already qualified as hosts and their performance was their best ever on the international stage. For Nigeria meanwhile.

From an opening match draw against Costa Rica drubbing by Mali, the home side were never on

Japan 4-0 in the FIFA Juniors World Championship in

But for many in Nigeria, just staging the event itself was some form of victory.

Long an international pariah, and barred from hosting the tournament in 1995, Nigeria had shown it could host the event successfully, organiser Colonel Abdulmuminu Aminu said.

Giving his verdict, FIFA

up the wooden spoon, being the only side to fail to score a single tournagoal. Kazakhstan did better.

undermined Nigeria's hopes of hosting the 2006

World Cup, but praised

the handling of the youth

Blatter accepted that

Nigeria had still a long

way to go in building the

hotels and setting up transport facilties needed

for the senior tournament.

with a "quantum leap"

between that and the

junior championship, FIFA officials said.

But the youth tourna-

ment had worked, he said.

We did it. I can say that

we have had a successful championship," said the FIFA president.

Among the clear losers

of the tournament were

several leading nations

which had gambled on

sending under-strength sides, including past win-

ners Argentina, and top

European sides Germany

Argentina struggled to beat lowly Kazakhstan 1-

0 in their opening match.

and went home in the sec-

Germany and England departed after their first

England, indeed, picked

round, while

and England.

three matches.

ond



Japanese Ogasawara holds his head in his hands as Spaniards jubilate after beating Japan 4-0 in the FIFA Juniors world championship in Lagos (AFP photo)

Maurice out to injury

MARSEILLE. France (AFP) -- Olympique Marseille striker Florian Maurice has been ordered to rest for at least eight days by club doctors here on Sunday after suffering from an ankle sprain.

Maurice was injured during Saturday's humiliating 4-0 defeat to outgoing champions Lens, and was replaced by Christophe Dugarry in the 25th minute of play.

Marseille William Eric Gallas, who was also taken off the pitch after colliding with Lens' Tony Vairelles. declared fit for training. after undergoing a scan on Saturday night.

Stunned after being struck in the face Gallas regained consciousness around 23:00 on Saturday night, according to teammate Dugarry.

Title favourites Marseille hung on to their one-point advantage over title rivals Bordeaux, despite their loss to Lens, after Bordeaux lost 2-0 at Sochaux.

Marseille's Fed Cup

Germans overpower Japan 3-1 in dramatic comeback

HAMBURG (AFP) — Germany made a dramatic comeback into the world's elite with a dramatic 3-1 victory over Japan in the Federation Cup World Group Two tournament here on Sunday.

Handicapped by the absence of World No. Steffi Graf, Anke Huber and Marlene Weingartner - out of the WTA tournament because of injury — the Germans nevertheless secured victory on Sunday from being one match all on Saturday.

World No. 13 Elena Wagner took her match against No. 84 Miho Saeki of Japan 7-6 (10/8), 6-3 after losing Saturday's match to World No. 139 Shinobu Asagoe 7-

Japan's Ai Sugiyama, World ranked No.

24, withdrew Saturday morning from her country's scheduled singles match with Wagner and was replaced by 22-year-old

However, the German victory was assured by Andrea Glass, 65th in the world, who in winning 6-4, 6-3 subjected Asagoe to the same fate she subjected Miko Saeki to on

German coach Markus Schur couldn't hide his delight stating that Glass "confirmed her superb form in training and has the necessary form to enter the Top 20."



Hacine Cherifi of Lyon, France (L) battles American Keith Holmes for the WBC World Middleweight Championship in Washington, DC. Holmes won the fight after the referee stopped the fight in the seventh round (AFP photo)

Cole rescues point for United

LONDON (AFP) Manchester United failed to oust Arsenal from the top of the English Premiership on Sunday after they had to settle for a 1-1 draw against Leeds United at Elland Road.

Against a side chasing hard match unbeaten run was in danger of coming to an end when Leeds winger Harry Kewell teased and tormented the Red Devil's defence before setting up Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink for his 18th of the season.

But an Andy Cole equaliser bundled home from close range ten minutes into the second half left United a point behind Arsenal with one match in hand.

The opener on 32 minutes was just reward for Leeds,

who themselves were looking to stretch their own record to 10 matches without defeat and celebrate coach David O'Leary's new fivevear contract.

O'Leary has vowed to take Leeds to the title inside that had the better of counterpart Alex Ferguson's treble chasers.

United, a pale shadow of the side which stunned Juventus in Turin last Wednesday, had just the one chance during the first 45 minutes when Leeds keeper Nigel Martyn twice cleared off the line within a second to deny Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole.

Kewell could have put

Leeds ahead three minutes from the break, flinging himself at a Stephen McPhail centre, but his powerful drying header flashed narrowly

Ten minutes after the restart the visitors were back on winner Cole stabbed home his 23rd goal of the season from close range.

Skipper Roy Keane's deft cross picked out Nicky Butt at the far post and although Martyn produced a fingertip stop to keep out the midfielder's header. Cole was on hand to poke the ball beyond the England international keeper. Leeds suffered a blow after teenage defender Jonathon

Woodgate was forced to limp

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off with a knee injury sustained as he challenged Cole for United's goal.

Woodgate's chances of making his England debut in Wednesday's friendly against Hungary following the first call-up of his career now

Leeds largely lost their way after Cole's predatory strike as United upped the tempo.

The hosts did almost regain the lead three minutes after Cole's goal, but Wes Brown. partnering David May in central defence in the absence of Achilles injury victim Jaap Stam. produced a timely challenge on Smith after the teenager had been put in the clear by Lee Bowyer.

It was a rare chance for the home side, though, who had gone off the boil since the break in front of a seasonhigh crowd of 40,225, with Ferguson's side looking the more likely to find the win-

Dwight Yorke should have won it at the death for Manchester United, but after a neat one-two with Teddy Sheringham he fired just wide of the upright.

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Sun. 25/4/99	Salah Saloon	05:00 p.m.	Zarqa Tel: 05/3902024
Mon. 26/4/99	Flix Centre	11:00 a.m.	Airport Way, Beside Safeway Tel. 5811240
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THE MASK OF ZORRO Shows:12:30, 3:30

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Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORDE 2 DISCLOSURE

CINEMA TEL:5934793 GALLERIA 1

urww.cns.com.jo/Galleria Will Smith & Gene Hackman...in **ENEMY OF**

ABDOUN

THE STATE Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45 **CINEMA TEL:5934793 GALLERIA 2**

ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Dennis Quied & Natasha Richardson...in

THE PARENT TRAP

Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

Hisham Yanes Theatre TEL: 4625155 The political satire

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Listings for films and showing times as received by cinemas and their advertising agencies.

LOCAL SPORTS SCENE

Boxers prepare for busy schedule

AMMAN - The Jordan Boxing Federation (JBF) will

host the Syrian team from May 5-14 for friendlies in Amman. It its latest meeting, the JBF decided to host the

Russian team May 2nd and confirmed participation in

Egypt's International Championship from May 19-25.

The IBF will also contact the International Boxing

Federation to name neutral international referees to offi-

ciate a number of matches at the 9th Pan-Arab Games

Syrian tennis team arrives Tuesday

AMMAN — The Syrian tennis team will arrive here on

Tuesday for four-day visit to hold friendlies against the

national team as part of preparations for the 9th Pan-

Arab Games. Representing the national team in the

marches, which will BE sponsored by the Jordan and

Gulf Bank, are Faris Azzouni, Ahmad Hadid, Yazid

Nseirat, Tareq Talal, Omran Nseirat, Abdullah Fedhah,

Marwan Shahrour, Dina Naffa', Rawand Azzouni, Lana

Qandalft, Hala As'ad, Ola Add and Mayyadah Azzouni.

Chicago

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Alverca

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Celta Vigo

Montpellier

Marseille

Bordeaux

Toulouse

Ostende

Genk

Ghent

Enqvist looking for a

comeback in Munich

MUNICH (AFP) - Thomas Enqvist will try and rediscover

the form which took him into the Australian Open final this year as he plays the \$525,000 BMW Open starting Monday.

keen to make up for an opening-match loss at the Monte

The red-hot Enqvist was the player to beat in January. He

won a pair of tourmaments heading into the first Grand Slam of the year Down Under and then fell in the Melbourne final

The Swede was unimpressive in Monte Carlo, lasting until

Seeded third is resurgent Brazilian Gustavo Kuerten, who is

Tommy Haas is the only German seed. He is placed fourth, ahead of No. 5 South African Wayne Ferreira, Swiss Marc

Rosset, Dutchman Jan Siemerink and No. 8 Mariano Puerta

Barring a last-minute complication, home-towner Boris

The 31-year-old, just weeks from retirement, pulled out of Monte Carlo following the Monday death of his father after a

But ATP Tour officials confirmed Sunday that Munich-

The German is planning a limited schedule which includes a final fling at Wimbledon before finally giving up his rack-

As winter clings on in Europe, weather is the main concern

only the second round, when he was eliminated by Spaniard

starting to find his touch once again on the clay.

Becker should be competing in the 32-man field.

based Becker was still entered in the event.

ets at the Mercedes Cup in Stuttgart in July.

against Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

The World No. 16 Swede is seeded second on the Bavarian clay behind Karol Kucera of Slovakia, a player who will be

Charleroi

Beveren 0

Sparta Rotterdam 4

AZ'67 Alkmaar 1

Strasbourg...

Bastia

Manchester United 1

81

74

102

— Al Hussein Tournament.

Charlotte

San Antonio

Sacramento

Golden State

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Francisco Clavet.

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Dutch league

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Hornets rise again in playoff chase

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (R) — The Charlotte Hornets stung the Nets with a 22-8 tear to close the third quarter and emerged with a key 97-82 victory Saturday over New Jersey. The victory lifted Charlotte into a tie with the New York Knicks and Toronto Raptors for the eighth and final playoff

spot in the Eastern Conference. David Wesley scored seven of his 19 points during the big run and Elden Campbell and Derrick Coleman scored 16 points apiece for the Hornets, whose nine-game winning streak came to an end Friday night in New York against the

"We played smart and we need to do that these next couple of weeks. Every game is critical at this point," said Campbell. "If you lose, you could fall two games back. We are fighting for a spot and at this point don't care how we win as long

as we win." Stephon Marbury led the Nets with 30 points. "There are a lot of teams competing for that eighth spot," said Wesley. "It's nice to control your own destiny. We could-

n't afford a hangover and now need to start a new streak." In Sacramento, Vernon Maxwell came off the bench to score 13 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter as the Kings climbed into sole possession of the final Western Conference playoff spot by holding off the Dallas Mavericks 105-102. The Kings posted their fifth straight victory to reach the

.500 mark for the first time since being 9-9 in early March. Vlade Divac led Sacramento with a season-high 28 points and Chris Webber added 17 points despite missing most of the fourth quarter with back spasms.

In San Antonio, the red-hot San Antonio Spurs made quick work of the slumping Los Angeles Lakers with another dominating performance at home.

Tim Duncan had 21 points and 13 rebounds as the Spurs routed the Lakers 108-81 for their sixth straight victory and I Ith in a row at home.

"This wasn't a statement game," Duncan said. "Statements come during the playoffs. We just want to play well the rest

of the season and let what happens happen." Duncan recorded his 32nd double-double of the season for the Spurs, who have won 25 of their last 29 to pull within two

games of the Utah Jazz for the league's best record. Shaquille O'Neal had 26 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers, who have lost five of their last seven and dropped one game behind Houston in the battle for the fourth playoff spot

and homecourt advantage in the first round of the post season. In Indianapolis, Reggie Miller scored 20 points and Travis Best added 12 off the bench as the Indiana Pacers moved closer to the lead in the Eastern Conference with an 87-69 win over the Chicago Bulls.

Chris Mullin had 11 points and six rebounds as the Pacers moved within one game of the idle Miami Heat for the best record in the East.

At Golden State, Donyell Marshall scored 18 points and Erick Dampier added 17 as the warriors snapped a threegame losing streak and matched their win total from last season with a 93-74 victory over the Denver Nuggets.

In Los Angeles, Rodney Rogers scored a season-high 19 points and keyed a 12-0 run in the fourth quarter as the clippers beat the Vancouver Grizzlies for the first time this season with a 105-96 victory.

Magnus Norman cruises into Orlando final

ORLANDO (AFP) - Eighth seed Magnus Norman of Sweden and unseeded Argentine Guillermo Canas barely broke a sweat Saturday in advancing to the final at the ATP Tour claycourt event here.

Norman rolled into his first ATP Tour final of the year by disposing of Belarussian qualifier Max Mirnyi 6-2, 6-1, in

Appearing in his first ATP Tour semi-final, Canas was leading seventh seed Christian Ruud 5-2, when the Norwegian retired with a right shoulder injury which has hampered him all season.

Currently ranked No. 64 in the world, Norman entered this event with a 3-6 match record, but has turned things around this week, failing to drop a set. The 22-year-old has won two career ATP Tour titles, both on clay. He won his first title in Bastad, Sweden in 1997 and won his second in Amsterdam last year.

In 1997, he defeated top-ranked Pete Sampras en route to the quarter-finals at the French Open.

Ranked No. 87, Canas won only one of seven ATP Tour matches heading into this tournament, but like Norman, has not lost a set this week and upset sixth seed Lleyton Hewitt in the second round. The 21-year-old has reached the final of two events on the Challenger circuit this year, including last week in Bermuda.

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Kuerten wins title as Rios succumbs to thigh injury

MONTE CARLO (AFP) -Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten won the first all-South American final in the history of the Monte Carlo Open on Sunday, lifting the trophy 6-4. 2-1 when Chilean opponent Marcelo Rios retired with a thigh injury.

The victory gave the 1996 French Open winner his fourth career crown and his first since Mallorca last autumn. All of his wins have come on clay.

This is the first time that the Brazilian flag has been flown here since (Formula 1 driver) Ayrton Senna (won the Monaco Grand Prix)," said "Guga," on his way to becoming a sporting idol in Brazil as Senna was before

"This is a very emotional moment for me," added Kuerten.

Rios, who won the title here in 1997, said that he first felt his thigh problem in a late semi-final win Saturday over Frenchman Jerome Golmard.

"The last thing I wanted to do was not finish this match," said the ninth seed, who only recently overcame four months of back problems which kept him from starting his season until last month.

"But I just could not go on," Rios said after a scheduled best-of-five sets final ended after less than on hour on court at a site overlooking the Mediterranean.

"I'm sorry it had to end this way. I really wanted to play it out, there was just no way." Kuerten collected a cheque for \$361,000 and goes into next week's BMW Open in Munich riding high as third

"I'm sorry this match could not go all the way," said the Brazilian. "I really wanted to win this title the right way." The final was the first for



Gustavo Kuerten

both men this year and gives Kuerten his first career Super 9 crown.

Rios led the series between the two 2-1, winning last year in Rome and two weeks ago in Estoril, Portugal, among the first events of the long clay season leading up to the French Open.

Rios called for a trainer after holding serve in his first game and taking a strapping off his thigh.

The Chilean managed to stay in the match, until Kuerten got a break for 5-4 after 40 minutes of play. After winning the first set, the Brazilian 13th seed was untroubled until Rios gave up 15 minutes later trailing 1-2 in the second.

The injury setback was a blow to the Chilean, who had had nothing but bad luck since storming into No. 1 in the world for six weeks last

Rios dropped to a 13-2 record in Monte Carlo, with his only other loss in the principality coming against Albert Costa in the 1996

His 1997 trophy here was his first in a Super 9 before adding titles at Indian Wells, Key Biscayne and Rome last year. Monte Carlo was his sixth event of 1999. Rios was playing in his first final since winning Singapore last October.

Ironically, Kuerten pulled out of Barcelona last week with a lower back injury, but found his fitness in Monte

Rios will come back into the Top 10 at No. 8 on Monday, while Kuerten will move inside the Top 15.



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Israeli settlers set up home on W. Bank hill

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM between Israel and (AFP) — A family of Israeli settlers has set up home in a large container on a hill in the West Bank, Israeli public radio reported on Sunday, amid a renewed push by Jews to settle in Arab areas.

The settlers moved into the shipping container set up near the settlement of Maale Levona between Ramallah and Nablus in the north of the West Bank, it said.

Israeli authorities also launched archaeological searches on Sunday in Hebron to prepare for the construction of new homes for settlers in Tel Rumeida, in the heart of the divided West Bank city of Hebron.

Work is also under way to expand the settlement of Havat Maon near Hebron, the radio reported.

Anti-settlement Peace Now claims that Jews have established some 20 footholds on West Bank hilltops since the signing of the Wye River peace accord nuity on the ground between

Palestinians in October. "It's obvious that Prime

Benyamin Netanyahu has chosen to allow the settlers to do as they please in exchange for their support for the [May 17] elections," Peace Now said.

The radio reported that rabbis in the West Bank had allowed work on the settlements to go ahead during the Sabbath, the Jewish day of

In another development, a right-wing Israeli MP said that settlers plan to take over nine houses left empty by Palestinians in a mostly Arab neighbourhood of Arab east

The buildings in the Sheikh Jarrah district have been acquired by an ultra-nationalist religious group known as Mityashvei Tzion which is run by MP Benny Elon of the extreme right-wing Moledet

The aim is to create conti-

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Riots kill dozens in Baghdad suburb'

DUBAI (AFP) — Clashes erupted between Iraqi protesters

and security forces in a suburb of Baghdad last week, leav-

ing dozens of people dead, Arabic newspaper Al Hayat

reported Sunday. Citing "trustworthy sources," the

London-based newspaper said the rioting erupted when

security forces attempted to prevent worshippers taking

part in Friday prayers at the Al Hikmah Mosque in the

charge of prison security and several other people were

killed in an attack on a house near the mosque that was

being used as a temporary headquarters for security forces,

Al Hayat said. Armed groups also attacked offices of the

ruling Baath party in Baghdad, the paper added. Iraqi offi-

cials quoted by the newspaper said the protests were held to mark President Saddam Hussein's birthday on April 28.

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israel's Foreign

Minister Ariel Sharon will hold talks at the Vatican on

Monday on a row between Christians and Muslims that

threatens millennium celebrations in Nazareth, the boy-

hood home of Jesus. Israeli officials familiar with the issue

said Sharon, whose visit will include an audience with

Pope John Paul, would tell senior Vatican diplomats that

Israel was eager to achieve a compromise in the dispute.

Muslims want to build a large mosque in Nazareth on con-

tested land below the Basilica of the Annunciation, where

Christians believe the angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin

Mary to tell her she would give birth to Jesus. "It's going

to be discussed at the Vatican, that's for sure," one Israeli

official said. "We are going to reiterate our hope to see a

compromise. The millennium is a year of peace, not a year

TEL AVIV (AFP) - A former Israeli secret service

informer was charged Sunday with failing to prevent the

1995 murder of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Avishai Raviv, a right-wing Jewish extremist suspected of

inciting right-wing comrades to activism, is accused of fail-

ing to inform his superiors about plans by convicted assas-

sin Yigal Amir to kill Rabin. Raviv, codenamed

"Champagne," was secretly paid by Shin Bet, Israel's inter-

nal security service, to inform on his militant associates.

According to the indictment presented to a Jerusalem dis-

trict court, Raviv was told by Amir of an earlier plan to kill

Rabin in 1995. However, he is not suspected of involve-

ment in the murder itself. Raviv, who is also accused of

belonging to a "terrorist organisation" over his creation of

an extreme right-wing group known as Eyal, has rejected

the charges. Shin Bet has long been opposed Raviv being

put on trial, fearing it would reveal details about its meth-

ods, but it changed its mind amid rumours that Rabin's

assassination was the result of a conspiracy involving the

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Mohammad

Khatami next month will make his first visit to Syria since

he took power in 1997, the official IRNA news agency

reported Sunday. It said the subject of Khatami's visit was

being discussed by Iran's ambassador to Damascus,

Hossein Sheikholeslam, and Syrian Information Minister

Mohammad Salman. It did not give specific dates for the

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian security forces killed at least nine armed Islamists in the northeastern Bouira region last week, press reports said Sunday. While the daily El Watan

Algerian army kills nine rebels

Khatami to visit Damascus in May

Informer charged over Rabin killing

Sharon to visit Vatican on Monday

Elon told the radio.

Settlers will take over three of the houses in Sheikh Jarrah on Tuesday and the remaining six at a later stage, the radio said.

Several days ago, Israeli authorities expelled a Palestinian family from its Sheikh Jarrah home after a court ruled in favour of a claim to the house by Jewish

A number of right-wing Jewish religious groups are waging a campaign to take over homes in Arab parts of east Jerusalem in order to strengthen Israel's hold on the city.

Israel occupied Arab east Jerusalem in 1967 and illegally annexed it as part of the country's "eternal capital" but its claim is not recognised by the international commu-

Palestinians hope to make Arab east Jerusalem the capiof an independent



BIKE CAMPAIGN FOR CLEAN AIR: Cyclists in colourful costumes take a rest as they prepare for another run during the Tour of the Fireflies bike tour in suburban Manila on Sunday. The event is part of Earth Day celebrations and aims to promote cycling in their clean air campaign (AP photo)

Fateh joins opposition in urging state on May 4

Palestinians want deadline on any interim period extension

ALL EIGHT PLO factions. including Yasser Arafat's own Fatch faction, joined together Sunday in calling on the Palestinian President to resist international pressure to put off the declaration of an independent Palestinian

"The PLO factions insist the transitional period of autonomy should not be extended in any way," said a joint statement issued by the

leadership of Arafat, to vote

Likud threatens to

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel's Minister

ruling Likud Party warned

Sunday that it would cancel

the Oslo peace accords if the

Palestinians declare an inde-

"In the event of a unilateral

proclamation of a Palestinian

state, the Israeli government will react immediately and

cancel the autonomy accords,"

Likud election campaign

In its election manifesto for

the May 17 elections, the

right-wing Likud said it was

against a "sovereign and inde-

pendent" Palestinian state and

called for negotiations on

It said the rights of a

Palestinian entity must be

restricted on issues such as

foreign affairs, security, immi-

gration, water resources, air

space and the environment.

Palestinian self-rule.

chief, Moshe, Katzav, said.

pendent state.

cancel peace accords

over Palestinian state

on a course of action for May 4, when the five-year interim

But Palestinian officials statehood declaration, as urged by world leaders, in exchange for international Palestinians' right to inde-

The other seven PLO factions which signed the statement were the two main PLO opposition factions, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), as well as Front, the Palestine People's the Palestinian Democratic Union, the Arab Liberation Front and the Palestine Popular Struggle

Meanwhile, Palestinians are seeking a deadline from the United States before agreeing to any extension to an interim period in peace accords, a senior official said Sunday.

Arafat's top negotiator, Saeb Erekat, told the Legislative Palestinian Council on Sunday that Arafat was awaiting U.S. views on a deadline before proceeding.
"We are trying to set a time

for the end of the interim period and we are continuing consultations and negotiations with the Americans,"

Palestinian aspirations to statebood.

Erekat said the Israelis have told the Americans they want an open-ended extension of the interim period.

U.S. embassy spokesman Larry Schwartz said he had not been briefed on the latest negotiations but that, as far as he knew, U.S. policy was still "a commitment to expeditious final status negotiations without setting a final date."

A spokesman for Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu had no comment on Erekat's report of the Israeli request, although it would be consistent with recent government pronouncements.

Also Sunday, the spiritual leader of the militant Hamas movement, Sheikh Ahmad Palestinian state in May. Yassin said the PLO invited

him and three other Hamas members to the Palestinian Central Council (PCC) meeting on Tuesday as observers. Hamas is not among the 11 Palestinian groups which make up the PLO.

"This is the first such invitation for us to attend a PLO meeting," Yassin told Reuters. "We are studying whether to attend."

A Palestinian official said officials from the militant Islamic Jihad group were also invited to attend the PCC meeting.

Yassin said although Hamas differed with the Palestinian National Authority over the kind of state that would be formed, it believed "any step that rids the Palestinians of the Oslo deals is a step in the right

Dutch police break up student party

amsterdam (r) --Amsterdam riot police stormed a house on one of the city's main streets early on Sunday to break up a drunken party of up to 1,000 students after it deteriorated into an orgy of vandalism. Police sealed off Weesperstraat, a major saffic artery, after revellers under the influence of drink and drugs started throwing household goods from the windows of the house onto the road below. police spokesman Anie Zandbergen said. He said police had monitored the party, attended by an estimated 1,000 students, throughout the night and had moved to evacuate the building at around 3:00 a.m. as the revelry spiralled out of control. "Several dozen police in riot gear went in to clear the building after students started throwing televisions, refrigerators and fire extinguishers onto the street." Zandbergen said.

Taiwan gangs provide stipends

TAIPEI (AP) - As a sort of mafia scholarship, Taiwan's gangs are paying the mittion of some university students in exchange for service as accountants or other skilled professionals after graduation, media reports said Sunday. Gang fronts operating as finance companies will pay school fees and monthly stipends of 30,00-40,000 Taiwan dollars (\$900-\$1,200) for needy students, newspapers and television said. quoting from a police report on gang recruiting tactics. Students then hand over school transcripts and identification and sign a "contract" agreeing to work for the gangs for an unspecified number of years.

Law journal lists 'stupid judge tricks'

NEWYORK (R) - One judge asked a woman defendant out for a drink, another was reputed to brandish a gun in chambers — it's all in a special "stupid judge tricks" edition of the National Law Journal. "Ticketfixing and drunk driving, the staples of most judicial conduct actions, don't count here," the paper reports. "These are stories of sheer, what-were-they-thinking? injudiciousness." The NEJ said the judges mentioned in the story had all left or been removed from the beach in the last year. One was James Scandirito, a former Michigan state judge who was scheduled to sentence a 22-year-old college student on a drunk driving charge. Scandinto asked the woman to meet him at a bar on a Saturday night to discuss the case, the journal said.

Clergy warned against indulgence

WARSAW (AFP) --- Poland's bishops warned the clergy Sunday against becoming too attached to a life of luxury. At a weekend meeting of the Polish synod in Gniezno, western Poland, bishops warned: "It is demoralising to see priests and monks becoming too attached to money, surrounding themselves with hixury goods, using hixury cars, charging high prices for pastoral services and lacking compassion for the financial difficulties of many families." The synod heard of several cases of customs fraud involving the importation of cars by Polish churchmen.

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British cow escapes abattoir

LONDON (AFP) — A cow which dodged death at an abattoir in Devon, southwest England, last week, has been bought by an animal rights group which managed to raise 1,000 pounds to save her. The young cow, named Liberty after π fled the slaughterhouse, had been transported from the farm where she was born to an abattoir in the small town of Kingsbridge. She escaped by charging her would-be killers and fleeing across the town. pursued by police, who were unable to nab here even after calling in the assistance of a

northern Baghdad suburb of Saddam City on April 16. It said a hospital close to the suburb had signed more than 250 death certificates. The following week, a colonel in

eight factions. is necessary to announce the sovereignty of the state of Palestine on May 4 on the occupied land within the borders of June 4. 1967, including Arab [east]

said. Central Council is to meet on Tuesday in Gaza, under the period set out in the 1993 Oslo peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians comes to an end. Arafat insists

Palestinians have the right to proclaim a state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on May

say Arafat could delay a pledges to recognise the pendence at a later date.

the Palestine Liberation

Netanyahu, also insisted that

Israel's sovereignty over

Jerusalem, including the east-

Tuesday to discuss the issue.

Likud also vowed to

strengthen its hold on the

occupied Golan Heights but

did not explicitly rule out any

territorial concessions on the

strategic plateau it captured

strengthen the Israeli presence

on the Golan and to revive

negotiations with Syria with-

The government will act to

from Syria in 1967.

Likud, headed by Prime out any conditions" it said.

was not negotiable.

European Union recently backed a year extenrecognised

ering attending a PLO meeting in Gaza called to decide whether to declare a

Algerian opposition warns of new government crackdown

ALGIERS Opposition leaders criticised the Algerian government on Sunday for banning a street protest over alleged vote-rigging, saying the move heralded a crackdown on political activity under the rule of the new president.

em sector occupied in 1967, "We denounce that decision and we reserve the right But Likud did not make any to sue the authorities behind reference to repeated warnings a ban which confirms our by Netanyahu that Israel warnings that political activiwould annex parts of the West ties and freedom of expres-Bank still under its control if sion will be stifled under the the Palestinians declare a state. new leadership," they said in The PLO is meeting on

a statement. The authorities said the opposition could hold an indoor gathering, but it was not authorised to stage a street demonstration which could threaten public order.

The statement was signed by main secular opposition leader Hocine Ait Ahmed, former prime ministers Mouloud Hamrouche and Mokdad Sifi, ex-Foreign Minister Ahmad Taleb

Ibrahimi, Islamist Abdullah Djaballah and former presidential adviser Yousef

The six politicians had been candidates for the presidency before they withdrew on the eve of the April 15's poll over alleged vote fraud, leaving former Foreign <u>Minister</u> Abdulaziz Bouteflika the only contender.

They vowed to stir opposition against Bouteflika's rule, including the use of street protests, to bring about what they called a "true democracy. Bouteflika, 62, favoured by

the dominant military, was declared the winner, taking some 7.4 million of the 10.5 million votes cast, according to the authorities.

He would officially take over from his predecessor Liamine Zeroual on Tuesday, Liberte and Al Alam Assiassi newspapers reported on

The opposition insists that between 75 per cent and 80 per cent of the voters boycotted the election, saying it did not recognise the results which it dismissed as "illegal and unconstitutional."

The government had said that 60.9 per cent of Algeria's 17.5 million electorate cast their ballots. A spokesman of the six

opposition leaders said they would meet on Sunday to consider their strategy after the authorities put a ban on their street protest planned for Monday. An emergency law in place

since early 1992 gives the government huge powers over political activity, including banning street protests and other gatherings. Bouteflika vowed to end

the country's seven years of violence which has so far claimed more than 70,000 lives. He promised to give details of his policy when he takes office

Ecevit's election victory confirmed by official results

said nine Islamists had died in Wednesday's incident, Sawt ANKARA (AFP) — Al Ahrar, the paper of the one-time ruling National Turkey's acting Prime Liberation Front, put the figure at 13 and other papers said Minister Bulent Ecevit and the army had used artillery and helicopters armed with his Democratic Left Party rockets. A civil defence group killed two armed Islamists (DSP) have been conon Friday in the same department, according to Al Khabar. firmed as the winners of Militia leader Hassan Hattab eluded security forces during last week's general electhese incidents and is preparing an escalation of his operations by preliminary offitions to show that he "is still a terrorist leader capable of cial results published by serious disruption," the L'Authentique newspaper reported. the election board on

The

Sunday. The DSP took 22.2 per cent of the vote according to the results carried by the Anatolia news agency, well up from its share of 14.6 per cent in the last elections of December 1995.

Nationalist Action Party

ultra-right

(MHP) more than doubled its share to come in second at 18.0 per cent (1995: 8.2 per cent). The pro-religious Virtue

Party came third with a share of 15.4 per cent, sharply down from the 21.4 per cent its predecessor, the Welfare Party, won in 1995. And the formerly power-

ful conservative parties led by Mesut Yilmaz and Tansu Ciller, the Motherland Party (ANAP) and the True Path Party (DYP), dropped to 13.2 per cent and 12.0 per cent respectively (1995: 19.7

According to these results, the DSP will hold 136 of the 550 seats in the new parliament. The MHP will have 129 seats, while 111 seats will go to the Virtue Party, 86 to ANAP and 85 to the DYP. Three seats were won by independent candidates.

The official vote count confirms the demise of the Social Democratic People's Republican Party (CHP), which only scraped 8.7 per cent (1995: 10.7) thus failing to clear the 10-per cent threshold for representation in par-

CHP chairman Deniz

Bavkal has already resigned. The pro-Kurdish

People's Democracy Party (Hadep) also failed to overcome the 10-per cent hurdle at 4.8 per cent, nevertheless up from its 4.2 per cent in 1995.

The only other party to garner more than one per cent of the vote was the Grand Unity Party (BBP), an organisation combining nationalism with religious values which won 1.5 per cent.

Some 32.7 million out of 37.5 million eligible voters cast their mandatory vote for a turnout of 87.1 per

The preliminary official results include the votes cast at the customs gates by Turks living abroad. Out of an estimated two

million expatriate Turks eligible to vote, only 66,000 travelled to Turkey to cast their vote. Support for the DSP was even higher than average

among expatriates, almost

30 per cent of whom cast

their vote for Ecevit. The Virtue Party also did much better among the Turks of Europe than at home, winning close to 23 per cent of the vote at the border polling stations,

sword Sunday in the west of the kingdom for the murder of a fellow national, the official SPA news agency said, quoting an interior ministry statement. Sultan Ben Abdullah Ben Dhiab Al Salmai shot Ayedh Ben Awad Ben Dhifallah Al Matiri following an argument, the statement said. It was the 12th execution announced this year in Saudi Arabia.

RIYADH (AFP) - A Saudi man was beheaded by the

Saudi beheaded for murder

liament. and 19.2 per cent).

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